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ABSTRACT

Designed as a forum for the exchange of ideas on significant issues in the humanities, this annual journal presents articles written by two-year college faculty in the humanities disciplines. The 1992 issue includes the following: (1) "Broken Glass: America's Racial Nationalists Speak," by Paul J. Devendittis; (2) "Theatre on the Moving South Carolina Frontier," by Susan Hult; (3) "John Smith, William Bradford, and the Mentality of Exploitation," by Robert Perry; (4) "Zen Buddhism, Japanese Aesthetics, and the Western Tradition: The Notion of Impermanence," by Virginia M. Meyn and Patricia L. Boutelle; (5) "Humanature: The Deep Ecology of Writing," by Joe Napora; (6) "The Single-Mention List," by Nancy LaPaglia, detailing perceptions of community colleges in American fiction; (7) "The Unbearable Lightness of the Curriculum: Rationale for an Innovative Interdisciplinary Humanities Program, 'Artifacts of Culture,'" by George L. Scheper; and (8) "How Readers Read: What Every Professor Should Know," by Brock Haussamen. Five book reviews are also included in the volume. (BCY)

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE
HUMANITIES REVIEW

December, 1992 Volume Thirteen

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CCHA Office:

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Editor:

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CONTRIBUTORS

Patricia Boutelle teaches art history and is Director of the Art Gallery at Saddleback College, Mission Viejo, California.

Paul Devendittis is a member of the faculty in the Department of History, Geography and Political Science at Nassau Community College, Garden City, New York.

Brock Haussamen is Professor of English at Raritan Valley Community College, Somerville, New Jersey.

Susan Hult is Professor of History at Central College, one of the colleges of the Houston Community College System, Houston, Texas.

Nancy LaPaglia is Professor of Humanities at Richard J. Daley College, one of the City Colleges of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois.

Virginia M. Meyn is the Chair of Humanities and Languages at Saddleback College, Mission Viejo, California.

Joe Napora is a member of the faculty in the Department of English at Ashland Community College, Ashland, Kentucky.

Robert Perry is Associate Professor of English at Prestonsburg Community College, Prestonsburg, Kentucky.

Max I. Reichard is a member of the faculty at Delgado Community College, New Orleans, Louisiana.

George L. Scheper is Professor of English and Humanities at Essex Community College, Baltimore, Maryland.

BROKEN GLASS: AMERICA'S RACIAL NATIONALISTS SPEAK

Paul J. Devendittis

The new fascists in America call their ideology racial nationalism. The term neo-fascist is used in this essay to include two major components: self-proclaimed Nazis and National Socialists with jackboots, or Doc Marten boots, swastikas and Nazi accouterments; and the far larger "racial nationalist" groupings who shy from the Nazi label but espouse a fascistic ideology in white supremacist or religious terms. They number in the tens of thousands. Neo-Nazis take names like the American Nazi Party, the National Socialist White People's Party and the White Aryan Resistance. Counting the recent Skinhead phenomenon, they claim upwards of 10,000 adherents. The best-known white supremacist quasi-religious groups adopt names like Aryan Nations and Christian Identity.

The ideology that emerges from a review of the most significant literature in the movement, like its European progenitors, emphasizes anti-communism, anti-Semitism, racism, authoritarianism, and the use of violence to achieve political ends. There are uniquely American aspects as well, including vitriolic attacks against "mud people" (all non-whites), anti-feminism (a variation on the theme of homophobia) and anti-Zionism (a variation on the theme of anti-Semitism). The apotheosis of traditional values - the family, the home, custom, tradition itself, honor, heroism - remains constant, as do the values themselves for the most part.

This review article represents an attempt to determine the intellectual origins and outline the major components of neo-fascist racial nationalism in the United States since the end of the Second World War in order to help trace its evolution. It is the beginning of an effort to understand the ideas which shape contemporary neo-fascist thought by reviewing a representative collection of the main texts in the movement. The works chosen differ vastly. They have been selected for their individual significance and their contribution to a discernible ideological attitude. Together they form a reasonable survey of the critical texts that have developed into the new racial nationalism. We must observe the thinking of our countrymen, some of them scholars, who have witnessed the flood of change sweeping the nation and the world and have been led to a new fascism. To paraphrase German historian Ernst Nolte on the fascism of a previous era, contemporary American neo-fascism is the reactionary answer to the great problems of the last forty-five years. Ideas do not cause revolutions; but history proves that some ideas in certain circumstances do guide and shape revolutionary change. It should be noted that while some of the authors examined here pay homage to the major philosophical influences on their work - Machiavelli, Hobbes, Hegel, Nietzsche, Spengler, and Ortega (as well as Gobineau and Houston Stewart Chamberlain) - this review chooses to let

the present-day racial nationalists speak for themselves, and concentrates on identifying the structure of consistency that emanates.

Francis Parker Yockey's *Imperium: The Philosophy of History and Politics* stands first and foremost in the historiography of American neo-fascism. Imperium presents the reader with a huge compendium of philosophy and history, a work of scholarship from a man with an encyclopedic knowledge of western history, a 626 page tome written in 1948 in four months' time without notes. The book is dedicated to the Hero of the Second World War - Adolf Hitler, as the text makes clear. Attacking the twin evils of Materialism and Rationalism, Yockey predicts a coming crisis of the twentieth century: annihilation wars, class war, a war pitting the colonial races against Western civilization. To combat this disaster which threatens life on the planet itself, a new spiritual unity is needed to liquidate the tyranny of nineteenth century ideas and replace them with the principles of the Age of Absolute Politics: Authority, Discipline, Faith, Responsibility, Order, Hierarchy, State, Ethical Socialism. In a word, Imperium,the creation of the Empire of the West.

The "Cultural-parasites", and "Culture-distorters" who defeated "the Hero of this Age", the great symbol of the future, won a temporary victory in 1945, but the organic inner imperative of History cannot be denied. The Future always defeats the Past. In the American Revolution of 1933 (the triumph of Franklin Delano Roosevelt), the Culture-distorting group in America (Jews, Marxists) may have seized central power, but the European evolution of 1933 (Adolf Hitler) symbolizes the soul of a great people, which can be distorted or retarded but never destroyed. The people is an organism, and a parasite cannot destroy the soul of its host. It can only divert its energy and stall its Destiny.

Yockey names the Jewish minority as primarily responsible for Culture-distortion, because for it western civilization is the repository of a thousand years of collective evil and hatred and persecution. While recognizing anti-Semitism as something as undesirable as the condition itself, potentially leading to Culture-distortion (can the author here be thinking of Nazi atrocities?), Yockey nevertheless concludes with a Hitlerian exhortation that the struggle between the Jew and his agents (the communists, the capitalists, the Negroes) and the Western race is a struggle for the continued spiritual-biological existence of the population of Europe.

All racial nationalists champion Francis Parker Yockey and pay homage to him, but they qualify their praise with concern or confusion over his complex theory of race. Yockey's organicism and historicism lead him to view race both objectively and subjectively, and bring him into dispute with the Leader, Adolf Hitler. Objectively, race represents the spiritual-biological community of a group. In this regard, a group with a spiritual and historical community tends to acquire a racial aspect. Thus the Jewish community equals a race, a spiritual-historical unit. But the subjective meaning of race is central: what a man feels, that which influences what he does. In the hierarchy of race, men of race have instinct, will and blood. But Yockey concludes that race need not include blood, if Spirit and Idea are present.

Thus the Nation is a People ("a spiritual organism created by History" (328)) containing a Cultural Idea. But as temporarily discomfiting as this theory may be, Yockey surely redeems himself to his followers when he outlines the final Great Synthesis of the triadic development of Western Civilization: Imperium as Unity, the cultural reunion of North and South, Teuton and Latin, Protestant and Catholic; Prussia, England, Spain, Italy, France. And fear not, although American ideology and world outlook have no future, having been lost to the Culture-distorter, we remain a spiritual ally of the West with a common fate. The soul of the American people still has a future, for the people is an organism. The same holds true for Mother Russia and the Russians.

In his autobiography *This Time the World*, first published in 1961, George Lincoln Rockwell is neither afraid to admit his mistakes, nor to lay claim to his own genius. His childhood fortunes and misfortunes, his much-decorated Navy career (the Commander he used as a title in the American Nazi Party actually refers to his naval rank at the time of his honorable discharge), his tumultuous and ultimately failed marriages, the abortive business ventures (including some success in publishing and commercial art, which came in handy) and his political transformation from Republican to National Socialist are discussed frankly and candidly. Rockwell, as one might expect from a naval officer who commanded three squadrons and showed talent as a creative entrepreneur, is an intelligent, articulate man. He writes clearly and forcefully, although the organization of material in this book is hopeless. There is no reference to the founding of the American Nazi Party in 1958 - or was it 1959?! Rockwell does celebrate his conversion to Nazism in Arlington, Virginia in 1958, when he became "an all-out Nazi", but he claims to have become a convinced Nazi in 1950, when as a conservative Republican he attempted to rent a hall to promote a presidential bid for General Douglas MacArthur. A "little old lady" alerted him to the influence of Jewish pressure groups seeking to deny MacArthur political office. He then read the *Protocols* and *Mein Kampf* and discovered National Socialism. Apparently it took him eight years before his mystical conversion, which his followers compare to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. He also says, however, that like Hitler, his anti-Semitism stemmed from earlier anti-communism. In Rockwell's case, anti-communism was discovered in Sociology I at Brown University. His instructor's "feeble, feminine approach" blaming environmental causes for our problems and denying the effect of biology, impelled the young student to question first sociology, then the social sciences, then liberalism and ultimately communism.

White Power, the sequel, was finished literally the morning Rockwell was killed in 1967. Some of it is repetitious, but it is more detailed and contains more analysis of the doctrine and goals of the ANP, which becomes the National Socialist White People's Party at this very time - a subtle shift to soften the anti-Semitic emphasis and accentuate the racist appeal. Part of Rockwell's significance lies in the fact that there are a dozen splinter neo-Nazi groups claiming the mantle of his original ANP, including two American Nazi Parties, a National Socialist Party of America, a

National Socialist American Worker's Party, a National Socialist White America Party and others.

In this work Rockwell outlines the "death rattle" of Western society, a victim of "spiritual syphilis". Turning to a nautical metaphor, he blames the "chart forgers" for the sick state of "our people", identifying the charters of the wreck of western civilization as "a gang of liberal liars". The ship wreckers have installed "crooked captains", crooks and traitors operating on the basic lie: the denial of Race and Breed (233-257). The heavy emphasis here is on Communist betrayals by our captains who sold us out in WWII, in China, in Cuba. But the following chapter, "The Ship Wreckers" indicts "Mr. Big", those who lead and manipulate the chart forgers and the rest. This is a breed of people called Jews, a racial conspiracy posing as a religion; whose secret world includes Communism, Zionism, the Black Revolution, commercial degeneracy and pornography, commercial racketeering in religion (kosher foods), and control of the Media. This list suggests some of the crudity as well as the virulence of Rockwell's anti-Semitism. In what would strike most readers as a digression both bizarre and ludicrous, he pens page after page on a Jewish conspiracy involving kosher food! His writing degenerates into vulgar racism at times as well, describing a "Black Plague", a Jewish plot to breed and organize the colored world. "We have produced a plague of niggers," he laments (271).

More instructive for an understanding of contemporary neo-fascism is the Commander's analysis of "fifty years of failure", meaning the failure of conservatives and the right wing of American politics. First, they have failed because they fight in "the Jewish-built conservative playpen" and never mention the Jewish racial enemy. Rockwell uses the coarse descriptive term, "kosher conservatism" (341), which is also utilized by the remaining authors discussed in this essay. It seems to have originated with Professor Revilo P. Oliver, a professor of classics and frequent contributor to *National Review* and *American Opinion*. Both Oliver and Rockwell specify William F. Buckley, Jr. as the paradigm of this aberration. But secondly, Rockwell exults in the failure of the opportunistic conservatives, because it creates an opening to the right. At the time he was writing, George Wallace was the Great White Hope. He, too, however, would deny publicly that he was a racist and would fail. Rockwell boldly asserts that "no conservative national candidate can win an election without the hidden issue of RACE" (373). Then making a tremendous leap in logic, he predicts that the failure of Buckleyism, Welchism (i.e. the John Birch Society) and Wallace-ism will pave the way for Nazism. George Lincoln Rockwell further predicted that he would be President of the United States in 1973, and the biologically-superior White Man would rule again to accomplish "exactly what Hitler and National Socialism did in Germany" (460).

Revilo P. Oliver personifies the legitimate academician as racial nationalist. Having been a Professor of Classics at the University of Illinois for over thirty years, Oliver brings a wealth of erudition and style to his book, *America's Decline: The Education of a Conservative*. Oliver was an early, influential contributor to Buckley's *National Review* and Robert Welch's *American Opinion*, the journal of the John Birch Society. In fact

America's Decline is basically an anthology of articles and book reviews from *National Review* and *American Opinion* from 1955 to 1966, with scattered items from other sources and two or three original pieces.

While much of the book deals with his association and conflicts with Buckley and Welch, it is valuable beyond these limits as a contribution toward a history of the failure of American conservatism from the desk of an articulate, erstwhile "genuine" conservative (contra today's phony conservatives who are in fact classical liberals in Oliver's view). Oliver's bitterness is also apparent in the one lapse into vulgarism he allows himself: the use of the term kosher conservative to describe conservatives who curry Jewish favors and support, and are thus in the service of the enemy.

Where does Oliver stand on the critical issues within the neo-fascist racial nationalist ideology? After summarizing World War II as "the Holy War", the "Crusade to Save the Soviet"; and after referring to *Mein Kampf* as "the great work on the Jewish question", Oliver names the three obvious targets for attack, if we are to save America and our race: the "Liberal" cults in general, the Communists in particular, and the Jews (5-19).

Oliver, steeped in history and philosophy like Yockey, does not blame the Jews for Liberalism. Adam Smith, Thomas Jefferson and the like are as guilty as Karl Marx for the materialism and mechanization of liberalism and its heirs. For Oliver, however, liberalism in America is crucial, because it is the mythology which shielded Communism and international Jewry. Also following Yockey, Oliver does not hate Jews. His anti-Semitism is deeper and more profound, although he shares the general anti-Semitic belief in Jews as a parasitical race threatening an Aryan higher race. But Oliver ridicules those in the movement who think that Jews are deliberately perverse and evil. His analysis sees Jews using cunning and deceit to promote their own superiority and the dominion of the international race on earth. And since they lack moral compunction about flouting traditional Western values, they are good at it.

There are no calls for revolution or Final Solutions in this treatise, but a bleak, pessimistic conclusion can be interpreted as a sounding of the alarum: "... the only really fundamental question is whether our race still has the will-to-live or is so biologically degenerate that it will choose extinction - to be absorbed in a pullulant and pestilential mass of mindless mongrels, while the triumphant Jews keep their holy race pure and predatory" (338).

Published in 1982, Ben Klassen's *The White Man's Bible* defies easy classification. He is included here because he remains a prominent activist, and his ideology well represents the quasi-religious neo-fascist right with a substantial following, even if not the tens of thousands Klassen claims for his church alone. He has recently linked up with neo-Nazi Skinheads and David Duke's National Association for the Advancement of White People in the Detroit area, confirming a marked tendency toward amalgamation and consolidation in the movement in the last five years.

Klassen ordained himself Pontifex Maximus of the Church of the Creator, and founded the religion called Creativity. *The White Man's Bible*

extends and expands the creed and program outlined in his first book, *Nature's Eternal Religion*. It is a long, sustained indictment of Judaism (and Jews), mud races (Blacks and Third-worlders) and Christianity (a Jewish plot). Simplistic, repetitive, dogmatic, bombastic, the *Bible* announces its Credo as a sound mind in a sound body in a sound society in a sound environment. What is good for the White Race is the highest virtue; what is bad for the White Race is the ultimate sin. Creativity replaces Judaism and Christianity by offering the Total Program, the Final Solution (sic), the Ultimate Creed.

After lambasting the Constitution for 1) not recognizing the Leadership principle, 2) not mentioning race, 3) letting stand the fraudulent swindle that all men are created equal, 4) incorporating the idea of separation of church and state, and 5) not heeding Ben Franklin's idea to exclude Jews from the Republic; after this diatribe, Klassen demands the protection of constitutional guarantees for the practice of his religion, which emphatically calls for the "elimination of Jews and all mud races"(174), and the abrogation of the Constitution itself. In a solemn warning Klassen denies declaring a war of violence against the Jewish government and its agents. He continues by saying he intends only to organize Whites and "drive the Jews from our society in all phases of influence and power just as Hitler did in Germany" (402). When, predictably, those attacked resist and use force against the Whites, they will be declared criminals and treated as criminals. "It will then be open season on all Jews" (402). White traitors will be hanged.

Back in the world of (non-professional) academic racial nationalism, Wilmot Robertson's *The Dispossessed Majority* is a long sociological-historical study of America's decline based on the theme that the Majority Americans of Northern European stock have been reduced to second-class status. The Majority now faces the prospect of losing the racial war to a liberal-minority coalition and the twin forces of liberalism and minority racism, both led by Jews. Robertson also throws in "the fallacies and absurdities" (549) of Marxism, Freudianism, Boasism (the social anthropology of Franz Boas) and contemporary social democracy as part of his litany of purported Jewish offshoots.

Extremely literate and narrowly well-read, Robertson utilizes numerous sources from the field of recent sociology and anthropology and makes use of graphs and charts depicting statistics on racial censuses, crime and ancestry. His own sociology and history are candidly racist, an overt expression of the concept of race at the various levels of human activity. Not denying that racism begets racism, Robertson argues that today in America one form of racism - minority racism - is replacing another. He cites what he considers new theories of racial superiority in academic scholarship which claim the innate superiority of Jews, naming Ashley Montagu, Ernst van den Haag and Nathaniel Weyl as major culprits. And lest one think this is merely a debate on racialism by scholars on different sides of an argument, Robertson issues a dark admonition:

The day anti-Semitism breaks out into the light again - as sup-

> pressed ideologies have the habit of doing - it cannot avoid becoming the stock-in-trade of the apocalyptic avenger who knows that emotion and dogma move more mountains than reason. The sudden release of tensions and hatreds pent up during decades of censorship and indoctrination may obviate any less explosive outcome (187).

There are no obscenities or call for final solutions or violence. In his conclusion, "The Northern European Ingathering", however, he states that there will be no end to the Majority's dispossession until it learns to reject categorically all the main currents of modern liberal thought - and the true nature of the illiberal forces which engender and direct it. This means a return to racial consciousness and an ideology embracing the grand design of evolution, which will ultimately select one race "to give birth to a new species, the better-than-man" (554). Everything hinges on the fate of the American Majority. If its dispossession is not reversed, there will be no halt to the decline of the West, no European ingathering. The dying fall of the American Majority may be more than the dying fall of America itself. The die is cast for a life and death struggle for the salvation of the earth.

Harold Covington remains active in what he terms 'the White racial nationalist revolution' and once served as leader of the National Socialist Party of America. Perhaps one might expect more from a book which takes its title, *The March Up Country*, from Xenophon's *Anabasis*, but Covington's slender volume is in fact a manual "for the practical and ideological instruction of revolutionaries...to increase the effectiveness of the world-wide White Aryan resistance movement" (vi). He resorts to the vilest racist and anti-Semitic epithets, referring to Jews as "hebes" and Blacks as "niggers" or "bubble lips". Even Uncle Sam becomes "Uncle Slime", and the Government, the " Zionist Occupational Government" (ZOG, the term used by Aryan Nations and the Order, or Silent Brotherhood). While other contemporary neo-fascists condemn homosexuality, Covington's homophobia impels him to celebrate AIDS as "God's greatest gift to our cause since Adolf Hitler" (129). Feminism is labeled sexual perversion. And so on.

Covington preaches a blatantly Hitlerian ideology, with references also to *Imperium*, *Which Way Western Man?*, and the writings of Oliver and Rockwell. Drawing directly from *Mein Kampf*, he warns first that the White, Aryan race is in immanent danger of physical extinction, extermination through genocide. The prerequisite for victory lies in "a spiritual transformation of our race from within" (vi). His conclusions also paraphrase the Fuhrer: the revolution will succeed because of the moral certainty of God's intention that our race survive. And again, "we struggle because it is right, because our Creator commands us to follow His path and work His will" (140).

The new White Revolutionary Party, which will be the first tool needed to seize state power, may be initially nationalist, proto-fascist and authoritarian, but will inevitably be Hitlerian and National Socialist. Covington is very careful to appear not to be inciting to revolution. He was expelled from the United States Army for racial agitation, and has been

arrested and even kicked out of the country. He never actually advocates violence, only the survival of the White, Aryan race. But he does not shrink from the necessary apocalyptic vision: "The coming destruction of Jewry and all its unclean works is the logical and natural conclusion of the behavior of the Jewish people" (57). As with Robertson, Covington feels that the pressure on the System will eventually be too great, and it will react, first by open disregard for the Constitution, and then by imposition of martial law. Unlike Robertson, however, Covington then wishes his revolutionary brothers and sisters " Good luck...and good hunting".

Reissued in 1989 by William Pierce's National Alliance (a prominent neo-fascist outfit), William Gayley Simpson's *Which Way Western Man* ranks as one of the most frequently quoted and referenced works in the racial nationalist library. A 758 page tome, Simpson's study marshals an abundance of scholarly, pseudo-scholarly and popular sources to trace the history of Western (White, Nordic) man from the beginning of time to "our present calamities." He concludes that the present crisis of the Nordic White Man lies with 1) the Negro, 2) the Jew and 3) Ourselves.

The tone is set with a dedication: a quotation from Francis Parker Yockey on the mission of this generation to the effect that no materialistic force can prevail against the Spirit of Heroism, and nothing but inner decadence can cause defeat. Unlike Yockey, however, Simpson believes firmly in the biological roots of race. Breed is everything; and Race is the key to History. Where does this place the Negro and the Jew in Simpson's *Weltanschauung?*

On the Negro: there can be no place for them in our society, they loom as a constant burden and peril, used by "alien masters" to pervert White culture. The solution: return all people with Negro blood to Africa - or die! And if our most glaring racial problem is the Negro, our most critical racial problem is the Jew, the fabricators of Christianity, democracy, communism and capitalism - the major obstacles to Western revival. The "solution of the Jewish problem": 1) all Jewish citizenship must be canceled, 2) Jews will be admitted to our shores only on temporary visas 3) all Jews out.

Simpson, once a self-styled Franciscan, is now prepared to accept violence on the part of "our people". "Any organism that fails to excrete its waste products - DIES!" (389), he says. Hitler used race to save Germany, Simpson reminds us. He then draws an analogy between America in the present era and Germany before the triumph of National Socialism - nations facing a breakdown of all law and order, on the verge of dissolution. Hitler emerged as the only salvation for the masses in Germany. While Simpson opposes totalitarianism, he apparently sees "some Hitler" as our salvation on the road to a genuine racial aristocracy, an axiocratic society for the new breed of Superman, "the Roman Caesar with the soul of Christ" (70). In this case, put aside Simpson's earlier polemic against Christianity, "an alien, Oriental, Jewish infection" (64), and against Jesus, himself a Jew and hence alien to Aryan peoples. The Christ of the new Superman, however, is Jesus the mystic, devoted to mysticism as a path to life, anti-materialist and anti-rationalist. We have come full cycle - back to

Yockey.

Is American neo-fascist racial nationalism a coherent ideology, or an intellectual system? Or does the thought described in this review amount to a mere mass of contradictions and bold assertions resting on assumptions? Need we be at all concerned about the thousands of our fellow citizens who espouse and sometimes act upon this doctrine? History will judge, of course, but in the meantime it is up to us to attempt to understand a phenomenon and interpret it.

No ideology or intellectual system has ever passed the test of absolute logic. Yet some, odious and insidious as they may have appeared to individuals of reason and respectability, became popular and powerful. Even if these influential ideas, say the myth of racial purity for example, never came to fulfillment, the possibility somehow was seized upon and sometimes changed the course of history. For reasons social and historical, ideas evolve through the decades and become a launching pad for extremist solutions when objective and subjective conditions are ripe enough.

In 1925 Adolf Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf* about the symptoms of decline in Germany as he saw them: the failure of education, Jewish control of the press and international finance, the epidemic of syphilis caused by the prostitution of love ("the Jewification of spiritual life"), the poisoning of the soul through the media and the entertainment industry, the disrespect for state authority, and the use of religion for political purposes. He went on to name "blood sin" (miscegenation) as the secular Original Sin. The Jewish doctrine of Marxism was defined as a categorical rejection of the personality, of the nation and its racial content - a force destructive of the elemental foundations of all human culture, "the end of humanity." In quasi-religious terms he called for "a new conviction, a new faith, a new will", based on "a fanaticism of faith." He asserted that the folkish philosophy represented the innermost will of Nature, a racial nationalism in conflict with "a bastardized, niggerized world." He outlined the guiding principles of the movement: the Leadership Principle, the resurrection of the German State ("a living organism"), the nationalization of the masses, intolerance of all other movements, the positive struggle of National Socialist aims coupled with the destruction of the opponents of those aims, the extermination of the international poisoners; and self-assurance, perseverance and tenacity. Finally, unless the tide was turned, the Aryan race faced "a state of threatened extermination."

This message, along with the extolling of traditional values (custom, patriotism, family, motherhood, discipline, soil, etc.) appealed to many Germans as demonstrated by the rapid growth of the Nazi Party after 1925. In the elections of 1928, however, the Nazis garnered less than 4% of the vote. In the elections of 1932, after the Great Depression and the failure of the major parties to solve acute problems, the Nazis polled over 40% of the vote. In 1933 Hitler and the Nazis took control over the German state. The racist ideology of a fanatical fringe came to represent the consensus of one of the great nations of the Western world.

The new fascist ideology is inconsistent, irrational and meretricious.

But a structure of consistency from Covington to Yockey has emerged. Every author views the world in conspiratorial terms in the classic mold defined by Hofstadter: rather than seeing conspiracies IN history, and singling out conspiratorial acts that do occur, they aver that history IS conspiracy, a skein of evil secret plots. This is history as extreme simplification - events, institutions and personalities judged solely by the attitude toward race, a spiritual-biological concept. By definition history, manipulated by the eternal Jew, is a degenerative process. If history is Nature, the Jew is anti-Nature - the parasite. And if a Covington wishes to reconcile his Christian beliefs with National Socialism (as did the Hitler of *Mein Kampf*, whatever came later), the White Revolutionary Party is doing God's work as well as sustaining Nature's laws. In fact, every author examined above employs the language of religious conversion: faith, sin, sacrifice, salvation, redemption, resurrection. As a group they also exhibit paranoia, the extreme pathology of prejudice. Redemption is at hand. The enemy will be crushed. A perishing humanity will be regenerated and saved. It is one's duty never to relax and never to give up.

The enemy list has been updated to include Negroes and other mud races, but the Jew has now been restored to the top of the list after a brief hiatus following World War II. Anti-communism and white racism had replaced anti-Semitism for a brief period as a result largely of revelations about Nazi atrocities against Jews.

But the new fascism sees international Jewry in all its alleged manifestations as the despoiler. Communists and Blacks are merely tools or agents of the Jewish conspiracy. Interestingly, as recently as the immediate post-Rockwell period (died 1967), it was thought that Americans would react too unfavorably to a Nazi ideology. We had fought Hitler in World War II, and Middle America was too far removed from the centers of Jewish manipulation. At the same time it was believed that racism directed against Blacks and recent Third world immigrants would more effectively recruit young, disaffected Americans fearful of unemployment, crime and drugs. As the literature examined here shows, this has changed. The buzz words and euphemisms once used in neo-fascist agitational propaganda to disguise the anti-Jewish impulse of the message have now been replaced with a more open, virulent anti-Semitism.

The same basic themes drafted by Hitler in 1925 appear today in American racial nationalism whether through a Rockwellian or Yockeyian prism. Whether in the leering, lurid, *WAR* newsletter of the White Aryan Resistance or the religious instructional pamphlets of Christian Identity, the archenemy is the same, and the objectives are the same or similar. Racial purity and salvation may be achieved in Heaven or Utopia. It makes no difference to the true believer.

No one dares mention concentration camps or extermination camps except in passing, usually to deny their existence. Yet there is no place for Jews, or Blacks, or homosexuals, or communists in the new new order. The notions of white racial supremacy, or Western Unity will not allow it. It is an organic imperative, Destiny Redux.

While Hitler railed against parliamentarianism, our neo-fascist writ-

ers pronounce maledictions on liberalism and democracy, and especially the doctrine of egalitarianism. They shy from advocating totalitarianism, preferring instead authoritarianism, autocracy, or a form of what Hitler called "Germanic democracy." In a Germanic democracy the people express "inner longings" until one man rises to proclaim the general will and guides the old longing to victory as a new order.

It should be noted that the new fascism of our era tramples basic American political principles - the liberal idea, democracy, a belief in equality. It seems that the phrase "100% Americanism" has taken on a new meaning, or rather has been reinterpreted to fit a different form. Now to be un-American means to embrace Jewish inventions designed to pervert the pristine Aryan, or Nordic, or White ideals of our true ancestry. It's in the blood, or the heart, or the soul.

The Ideologues of contemporary neo-fascist racial nationalism are not simply engaged in a revision of the era of the world wars, or of the Holocaust. Nor are they simply the extreme right manifestation of disaffection and alienation. They are advocating nothing less than the resurrection of Adolf Hitler and National Socialism. National Socialism by any other name, be it Ethical Socialism, Racial Socialism or Racial Nationalism, is still fascism. History shows that the road from liberal democracy to authoritarianism is often relatively long and difficult; but the road from authoritarianism to fascism is very short.

David Duke's shadow may be pale - and short as well, but it is also nasty and brutish. He is one American who has read the books in this review article. In fact he continues to sell some of them from his office to this day. An admitted former neo-Nazi (we seem able to embrace former Klansmen without so much discussion) has entered the mainstream of American politics. In fact it is not unreasonable to think that only the image of young Duke in a Nazi uniform stands between him and national office.

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THEATRE ON THE MOVING SOUTH CAROLINA FRONTIER

Susan Hult

The theatres of Charleston and Greenville in South Carolina represent two different phases of America's frontier. Charleston flourished as part of the southern colonial frontier, and the cosmopolitan lifestyles of its residents reflected its position as one of the colonies' great pre-Revolutionary seaports. Greenville's growth followed another pattern. Settled about three quarters of a century after Charleston, Greenville's farmers concentrated on raising foodstuffs on small farms as was typical of the back country rather than cotton and rice as did the low country farmers.

These two cities offered different cultural lives for their inhabitants as well. Charleston's social calendar revolved around many cultural events of which the theatre proved most popular. As a result, the city boasted a number of firsts in the world of theatre for the colonies. Greenville's populace enjoyed circuses and variety shows to a greater extent than the theatre, but supported a thespian troupe in the town for three years in the early nineteenth century. Though Greenville's theatre group moved on after its brief tenure, it represented the more roughhewn entertainment, and the resulting audience reactions and behaviors, typical of Jacksonian America.

This paper deals with the first theatre in each of these cities. Rather than recite lists of plays and the dates on which they were performed, the focus will be on the theatre experience: the theatres themselves, the actors, the audiences, and the plays popular with the audiences. Moreover, it will show how the Dock Street Theatre and the Greenville Thespian Society reflected their frontier societies. To understand the theatre experiences of each city necessitates a glimpse of the cities themselves and the historical contexts within which the theatres developed.

In the early eighteenth century, Charleston, the sensuous city as George C. Rogers, Jr. called it, entered into its "quintessential" century (55). The city's setting provided continuity despite the hardships endured by generations of Charlestonians. Charleston owed much of its popularity to its "natural glamour and charm" and to the pride its residents displayed about it. Artists, cabinetmakers, silversmiths, and other artisans and merchants bustled along Charleston's streets and mingled with those people newly arrived in the colonies whose many accents added to the city's glamour. Slaves also reached North America through the port of Charleston, where South Carolina's planters came to purchase them and to spend the summer season in their Charleston homes. Residents built their finest homes to face the water in order to impress visitors. Charleston single and double houses became famous for their quaint architecture and added to the city's reputation as a wonderful place to visit or live (55-58).

City markets lined Charleston's streets as did "...azaleas, gardenias, camellias, and other flowering bushes introduced to the colonies via

Charleston's port" (55-58). According to Rogers, "picturesque yellow jessamine, dogwood, live oak, and candleberry trees added to the city's considerable atmosphere" (55-58). But elegant entertaining and a love of the good life contributed as much to Charleston's glamorous reputation as its physical ambiance (55-58). The emergence of a professional theatre enhanced this reputation.

In 1703, an actor named Tony Aston, who performed under the stage name of Mat Medley, arrived in Charleston from Jamaica. He described himself as, "full of Lice, Shame, Poverty, and Nakedness," (Brocket 107) but apparently quickly adapted to life in Charleston and went on to produce what is generally acknowledged as the first professional theatrical performance in the colonies. Aston remained in America less than one year before traveling to England. Before he left, though, he planted the seeds for a rich theatrical tradition in Charleston, and attending the theatre became the most popular form of entertainment in the city.

After Aston, other thespians made the trip from England to the colonies. The first strolling actors in the colonies came from there. In January 1735, a group of these actors performed Thomas Otway's tragedy, *The Orphan*, on a stage set up in one room of a tavern owned by Charles Shepeard. The room doubled as a Court Room and, as such, was well known to Charlestonians (*South Carolina Gazette* 11, 25 January 1735, 1, 8 February 1735). For an admission price of forty shillings (provincial currency) a patron saw the play, a prologue, and an epilogue (*South Carolina Gazette* 8 February 1735). To put this amount of money into perspective, a carpenter earned a daily wage of thirty shillings plus food at this time. A citizen of Charleston wrote the first evening's prologue that recounted the colonists' triumph over the wilderness and marked the first time a locally written prologue or epilogue had been performed in America. The prologue reflected Charlestonians' belief that, more than half a century after the founding of Carolina, the city was sophisticated, particularly for a North American city. Considering their victories over disasterous fires, hurricanes, and colonial epidemics, Charlestonians had a right to be proud of their survival. The reality was that life in Charleston was still hard, "...life was short, and mortality high" (Rogers 26).

The epilogue to the January 1735 performance of *The Orphan* was also written by a Charlestonian. It predicted great things for the future of the city' s theatre. In the excitement of opening night, theatregoers envisioned performances of tragedies by William Shakespeare and comedies by the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth-century dramatist William Congreve (*South Carolina Gazette* 25 January 1735).

No description of that first performance survived, if one was indeed written. Regular theatre criticism played no part in the early theatre experience of America's colonies. In fact, *The South Carolina Gazette*, Charleston's newspaper, paid very little attention to the actions and lives of the strolling actors. Early notices of plays gave the names, places, and times of the productions and reported ticket information. Actor's names and other pertinent information did not appear in these notices. Hype was

to be a phenomenon of the future. But the players probably needed little promotion to attract colonists to their performances. Theatre offered a welcome escape and a chance to socialize. The novelty of the dramatic productions lured many, while those newly arrived from Europe could participate in an activity reminiscent of their old homes.

Early audiences tended to be rather sophisticated. Not so the scenery, props, and costumes. No native designers apparently existed in the colonies, so sets and other essentials had to be shipped from England. Frequent shipments were not the rule. Equipment could be years old before it was replaced by anything new. Candlelight and oil lanterns served as the sole lighting for productions, and their dimness no doubt hid much of the apparent shabbiness of the sets (Brockett 298).

Male actors dominated the theatrical scene of colonial America and often played the female roles in plays. Female actors, though not a large group, also occasionally cross-dressed to portray men. The leading lady of Charleston's first production of *The Orphan*, only identified by her stage name, Monimia, read the initial epilogue, written especially for that play, in a man's clothing.

In addition to the premier performance of *The Orphan*, Charleston's initial theatre season included three additional presentations of the play. Despite the opening epilogue's vision of staging plays by Shakespeare and Congreve, it would be years before that happened. Only two other works appeared on the stage housed in the Court Room. The *Spanish Fryer*, a comedy by seventeenth-century English poet, critic, and dramatist John Dryden, played to enthusiastic audiences during 1735 and held the distinction of being the first advertised opera in America (*South Carolina Gazette* 22 March 1735). *Flora*, or *Hob in the Wall*, by another eighteenth-century poet, Colley Cibber, also entertained Charleston audiences during the 1725 season (*South Carolina Gazette* 15 February 1735). Even during its premier season, the city's theatre offered a diverse selection of dramatic entertainment. Pantomimes proved popular with Charleston's theatre patrons, and after two 1735 performances the actors amused their audiences with one entitled *The Adventures of Harlequin and Scaramouch*, probably written by Henry Holt. Holt arrived in Charleston in November 1734 and began a brief career as a dance master and a possible avocation as a scandal-maker before leaving for New York City in 1737 (Curtis 2).

Clearly, theatre caught on in Charleston. City leaders planned for the construction of a theatre building on a parcel of land located on the southwest corner of Church and Queen (Dock) Streets, owned by Nicholas Barlicorn. *The South Carolina Gazette* assisted in the recruitment of subscribers for the 1736 season. Doubtless those in charge used the money garnered from the subscriptions to build the new Dock Street Theatre. No list survived of the original subscribers, though the number must have been substantial enough to allow for the construction of the initial playhouse (*South Carolina Gazette* 3, 10, 17 May 1735). Charles Shepeard collected the money and, according to Eola Willis, thus served as Charleston's first

"theatrical advance agent" (Willis 23). From the beginning, his tavern served as the theatre's box office.

William Holliday, a former English tavern keeper, worked as the Dock Street Theatre's first manager. Though the advertisements still revealed nothing about the actors involved in the theatre's productions, most certainly many of the premier season's players returned to act in the newly finished structure. Monimia, *The Orphan's* leading lady, definitely returned to work with Shepeard and Holliday (24).

The city's newspapers virtually ignored the new theatre group that elicited such excitement amongst Charlestonians. The lack of print space did not reflect the city's very real enthusiasm for the genre; rather, as Willis points out, the absence of space allotted the playhouse's productions most likely reflected the belief that "papers should not be used for such trivial matters as the merits or demerits of plays" (24).

Nevertheless, the new Dock Street Theatre opened on February 12, 1736 with a performance of George Farquar's comedy, *The Recruiting Officer* (*South Carolina Gazette* 12 February 1736). During the eighteenth century theatres resembled modern-day tennis courts used for tournament play. Audiences sat above the stage, a position that enabled them to view a production from every angle (Ravenel 128). Though no photographs or drawings of the original Dock Street Theatre exist, presumably it was built in this fashion. Playhouses, as theatres were often called, ordinarily were no fancier than barns, and possibly only as comfortable.

Three types of seats could be purchased for the performances: boxes that cost thirty shillings, pit seats (wooden benches) that cost twenty shillings each, and gallery seats which theatregoers obtained for fifteen shillings per seat. The printer delivered the tickets to Charles Shepeard's tavern on the day of the performance to be picked up by that night's patrons. William Holliday, the manager, opened the doors to the theatre in the afternoon for the customers to select their seats. Apparently no seats were reserved before the afternoon of the performance, because ads in the *Gazette* urged subscribers to "send to the stage door in the forenoon to bespeak places, otherwise it will be too late" (*South Carolina Gazette* 24 January 1736).

An evening at the theatre guaranteed a festive occasion. Women dressed in their finest linen, silk, and lace gowns and adorned themselves with jewelry. Masks hid ladies' identities and concealed blushes resulting from some of the more raucous comedies. Men wore powdered wigs and dressed in formal attire, usually with swords at their sides (Johnson 1947). For the opening night of the Dock Street Theatre in 1736, most of South Carolina's Lord Proprietors, justices, and officers attended the show along with Charleston's merchants, planters, and artisans. Critics and audiences alike viewed Farquar's comedy as brilliant, witty, and bawdy, and, as it had with London's and New York City's patrons, it proved very successful with the Dock Street Theatre's spectators (Johnson).

Thomas Dale, a local physician and son-in-law of the prominent Miles Brewton family of Charleston, wrote the epilogue that accompanied

the first performance of *The Recruiting Officer* in the city. It registered another first for Charleston, as no other American theatre had ever presented an epilogue that was actually signed by its author. An actress known only as Silvia delivered the epilogue that evening and, like Monimia before her, dressed as a male (Thomas Dale Collection).

In April 1736, amid some mystery, the owner of the Dock Street Theatre put the building up for auction along with its scenery, costumes, and land. Apparently the situation caused strained emotions and resulted in public accusations. *The South Carolina Gazette*, on May 22, 1736, published the following poem regarding the auction:

On the Sale of the Theatre

How cruel Fortune, and how fickle too
To crop the Method made for making you—
Changes, tho' common, yet when great they prove,
Make men distrust the care of mighty Jove.
Half made in thought, (tho' not in fact) we find
You bought and sold, but left poor H___ behind.
P.S.Since so it is, ne'er mind the silly trick,
The pair will please when Pierrot makes you sick.

Obviously the sale provoked bitter feelings, but no exact records of who was upset and why remains. "H___" probably referred to either William Holliday, the theatre's manager, or Henry Holt. The poem implicated Holt especially by its mention of Pierrot, the main character in Holt's pantomime produced during the theatre's initial season. Circumstantial evidence also suggested Holt might be the "H___" of the poem. Two weeks after Isaac Simmons took out a notice in the *Gazette* denouncing his wife, Mary Simmons, for deserting him in favor of working "in the Play House in Charlestown" against his wishes, Henry Holt left South Carolina for New York City (Curtis 3,4). There may be no connection, but the timing of the incidents encouraged speculation. Either way, the inclusion of a name brought no real clarity to the meaning of the poem.

As was and is the tradition of the theatre, the show went on. A third season opened at the Dock Street Theatre in November 1736. The new owner of the theatre (who remained anonymous as did the seller) offered the previous subscribers new tickets for the coming season. Evidently whatever trouble precipitated the sale of the theatre blew over (*South Carolina Gazette* 6 November 1736).

Throughout their tenure in Charleston, the players performed an average of one play per week, though documentation of each has not endured. Of those recorded, Charlestonians favored Farquar's comedy *The Recruiting Officer* (produced a minimum of five times between 1735 and 1737) and Otway's tragedy *The Orphan*. Another tragedy, Cato, by the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth century English essayist, poet, and statesman, Joseph Addison, and George Lillo's *The London Merchant or*

the History of George Barnwell were also very successful during the Dock Street Theatre's first three seasons. Charleston audiences equally enjoyed farces, particularly Coffey's *The Devil to Pay, or The Wives Metamorphosed*, adapted from the comedy *Devil of a Wife*. The players most likely eventually offered some Shakespeare at the Dock Street Theatre as promised on the original opening night (*South Carolina Gazette* 27 November 1736, 4 December 1736, 9, 16 March 1737). One nineteenth-century writer suggested that "The Song of Mad Tom," a dance performed occasionally after a play, was derived directly from *King Lear* (Willis 31). If indeed true, it would substantiate the claims by Charleston's theatre patrons that the Dock Street Theatre produced the "first recorded instance of anything Shakespeare" in America (32).

The same type of productions were offered by the Theatre for the rest of the decade. Performances ceased in 1740, possibly due to the first of three fires at the theatre or to the rise of religious fervor in South Carolina at the time and the distaste of its adherents for the theatre. A combination of the two causes may be closest to the truth (Johnson 1947).

While Charleston theatregoers enjoyed a variety of different plays in a relatively gala and cosmopolitan atmosphere, Greenville, a century later, established a very different kind of theatrical experience for its residents. Set in a contrasting physical and demographic milieu, life in Greenville was far from easy in the 1830s.

Like Charleston in the 1730s, Greenville in the early nineteenth century was a frontier society, only more so. Greenville lacked Charleston's sophistication. According to Albert N. Sanders, in Greenville "horses, oxcarts, horse-drawn wagons, carriages, and stage-coaches served as transportation along the unpaved roads" (Sanders 87). Rainy weather made even these forms of conveyance very dangerous. Wagons also brought building materials to the village for those structures not erected by local artisans using resources from the area. Springs and wells supplied water. A few lamps and candles furnished lighting, while fireplaces provided heat (87).

Economic hard times came to Greenville in the 1820s and lingered in the early 1830s. One reason was the glut of cotton on the world's markets due to the southern Gulf Plain's rapid expansion of cotton production. The glut forced cotton prices from thirty cents per pound in 1818 to about eight cents per pound by 1831. Furthermore, Charleston's cotton planters and those of other areas began to produce their own foodstuffs, limiting the market for upcountry corn, wheat, and hogs (*Greenville Mountaineer* 4 June 1831, 12 November 1831).

The depression, which lasted until the late 1840s, was responsible for Greenville's emergence as a resort town. Wealthy planters who once visited Newport, Rhode Island and Saratoga, New York (and returned to Charleston after the first frost each year) changed to summering in Greenville. Their incomes had been drastically reduced by the depression, and growing sectional tensions coupled with the economic problem hastened the planters' discovery of the "clear skies and invigorating air, and mild climate" of Greenville (Sanders 87-88).

In addition to being a resort town, Greenville served as a Court House, trading village, and droving center. These activities shaped its public life: the town took on a festive air on Sale Days (Mondays), Muster Days, or during Court Week. At the time of its incorporation, in 1831, Greenville had a population of about six hundred people. By 1836, the year of the establishment of Greenville's first theatrical troupe, the population had grown to approximately one thousand persons. According to Albert Sanders, President of the Greenville Historical Society, the town in the 1830s was "a unique blend of frontier and aristocracy with a healthy leavening of in-between groups (Sanders 85).

Greenville's residents, like Charleston's before them, predicted great things for the town. As Elizabeth Perry wrote from Charleston to her husband, Benjamin F. Perry, "I hope the Upper Country will in time be as prosperous as your sanguine imagination seems to expect" (Perry Papers) Benjamin Perry was not alone in his confidence, and the Thespian Society formed in Greenville in March 1836 was a sign of the village's progress.

The location of Greenville's first theatre is a mystery. Advertisements in the *Mountaineer*, the town's newspaper, though much more detailed than those of Charleston's earlier theatrical ads, failed to mention the whereabouts of the theatre. Apparently the theatre's proprietor felt no need to offer directions to the location of the first performances, which hints that the spot was well known. In all likelihood, the troupe performed its initial plays in or above a downtown shop. Several downtown businesses as well as the Post Office sold tickets to the productions. Wherever it stood, the building was surely constructed of wood since every newspaper advertisement stressed the theatre's no smoking policy (*Greenville Mountaineer* 1836-1837).

Advertisements also detailed the casts of each play, but strictly by surname, using the prefixes Mr., Mrs., and Miss to acknowledge the gender of each player. From where did these players come? No specific information survives, if it ever existed. While early notices hinted at the amateur status of the thespians, the census records of Greenville County listed none of them as residents in either 1830 or 1840. Clearly though, these actors formed a regular troupe, each member of which contributed in some way to every production. The group numbered enough women so that, unlike the early Dock Street Theatre, each gender played roles written distinctly for it. As was traditional at the time, members of the Thespian Society helped with all aspects of the stage presentation, not just the performing of character roles (Freedly and Reeves 483).

Descriptions of the theatre paint a picture of a very elegant and comfortable environment in which to enjoy plays. These portrayals probably lacked total accuracy. In fact, players painted scenery on roll drops that served a variety of purposes. Roll drops of exterior settings, plain and fancy interiors, and individual rooms set the mood for each scene, and one generally served as a front curtain. Seating facilities and stage lighting likely resembled that of the Dock Street Theatre. But elegance is relative, and for the residents of Greenville who routinely battled the village's mud, the

Mountaineer's description of the theatre may have been merely an exaggeration.

The Thespian Society played to full houses in Greenville from the premier show, and the enthusiasm of theatre patrons matched that of the Dock Street Theatre's customers. One theatregoer described the scene at the opening of *Fortune's Frolic* (penned by an unknown author) in the following manner: "All the fashion and beauty of our village were in attendance, and all equally delighted with the performance" (*Greenville Mountaineer* 12 March 1836).

Greenville's audiences differed from those in Charleston despite the villagers' enthusiasm for their Thespian Society. For one thing, the majority of advertisements emphasized that the proprietor denied admission to those considered "improper characters." On several occasions the troupe found it necessary to remind patrons that they required a certain decorum especially in the presence of ladies. The October 30, 1836 performance of *The Locket Discovered, or the Twins Restored* had to be stopped due to the fact that "several ladies had been forced to retire in consequence of indecorous conduct on the part of some 'persons' in the house" (*Greenville Mountaineer* 31 October 1836).

Members of Greenville's upper class apparently did not often attend the theatre in the village. Letters studied from six manuscript collections dated 1836-1839 failed to reveal a single mention of theatre attendance in Greenville. Due to the nature of the letters, had any of the family members gone to one of the plays, it surely would have been reported. Evidence suggests that Greenville's prominent families did not support the troupe.

Who did frequent Greenville's theatre? People who particularly enjoyed farces attended. The genre dominated the offerings of the Thespian Society for their entire three year existence. Such works as *Irish Tutor, Too Late For Dinner, The Mock Doctor, or the Dumb Lady Cured, Raising the Wind*, and *Lover's Quarrel* played often to packed houses. Advertisements did not reveal the authors of these farces, but perhaps like those produced by the Dock Street Theatre, each was adopted from a comedy to suit the audiences. An unnamed Greenvillian wrote the farce *The Locket Discovered, or the Twins Restored*, based on a well-known literary device, which suggests some experimentation on the part of the thespians. The show ran on several occasions and residents expressed pride in the fact that a native of the town had created a successful play (*Greenville Mountaineer* 15, 27 June 1836).

Players took turns performing popular comic songs between farces (most evenings featured a double bill), but unlike the Dock Street Theatre, generally skipped the serious prologues and epilogues. The troupe did make an attempt to present a full bill of tragedies. On several occasions, the ensemble produced Otway's *The Orphan*. But each time a farce, *All the World's a Stage*, followed the more serious offering (*Greenville Mountaineer* 3 December 1836).

Theatrical criticism, though not necessarily popular, took the form of letters to the editor such as those the *Mountaineer* published following productions of *The Stage Manager* and *Fortune's Frolic*. These reviews concentrated on the story content of the two plays and on the character portrayals by the actors. In general, the residents wrote glowing reports. But neither hedged at pointing out one or two faults with the shows. At times the reviews combined praise and, if not criticism, reservations. As one writer suggested, the character of Margery in *Fortune's Frolic*, played by Mrs. Cooper, was portrayed "to perfection," and "if it were not for her age, we should not hesitate to predict ...[for her] considerable distinction" (*Greenville Mountaineer* 10 August 1836).

The initial burst of enthusiasm for the Thespian Society's productions declined from late 1836 to the summer of 1837. In August of that year, though, the troupe reorganized under the direction of a Mr. W.L. Nelson. Music played an important part in Mr. Nelson's life, and he replaced the usual intermissions' comic songs with self-described "musical olios" (*Greenville Mountaineer* 10 August 1837).

"Thespian Hall," located under Greenville's Printing Office, served as the new theatre beginning in 1838. The group procured new scenery and costumes, but continued to charge the standard admissions they had set in 1836: fifty cents for any adult, half price for all children. Despite the new surroundings, audiences continued to misbehave according to pleas set forth by the actors and the proprietors in their advertisements (*Greenville Mountaineer* 17 August 1838, 12 February 1839).l

The *Mountaineer* last recorded a play produced by the town's Thespian Society on February 26, 1839. *Fortune's Frolic* and *All the World's a Stage* provided the last known theatrical fare until nearly one hundred years later, when the Greenville Little Theatre was formed. Neither the newspaper nor any other surviving documents offered a reason for the troupe's demise (*Greenville Mountaineer* 26 February 1839). Most likely, the actors tired of fighting the audiences and moved on, perhaps to find work in New York City, New Orleans, Charleston, or one of the other theatrical centers of the day (Brockett 298-299).

Greenville and Charleston offered their residents a chance to experience theatrical productions in a way most suited to each city's environment and culture. Charleston, a cosmopolitan and glamorous place, yielded a diversity of plays from its Dock Street Theatre from 1735 to 1740. Its actors were professionals from the beginning, accustomed to performing a variety of shows from farces to comedies to tragedies. Charlestonians embraced their theatre with enthusiasm, showing their support through their subscriptions, used to build a theatre structure, and by their faithful attendance. The theatre represented a social activity considered by many of the city's inhabitants a tie to the Old World. This was important for a society convinced or trying to convince itself that it had evolved beyond its rough frontier stage.

Greenville made no pretense regarding its frontier status. While the village's residents were no less enthusiastic in their own ways about the

Thespian Society than Charlestonians were about the Dock Street Theatre, the Society produced fare geared to its more bawdy, less sophisticated audience. Each theatre met the needs of its community to the best of its ability in environments that offered dissimilar cultures. And each theatre reflected its community's phase of frontier development.

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JOHN SMITH, WILLIAM BRADFORD AND THE MENTALITY OF EXPLOITATION

Robert Perry

In the first chapter of his book, *The Unsettling of America*, Wendell Berry argues that "the mentality of exploration" is deeply rooted in the American past (7). We can understand a great deal of our history, he says, if we think of ourselves as being divided between exploration and nurture, between the impulse to exploit the land's resources and move on, and the impulse to nurture those resources and establish a home. "The first and greatest American revolution," says Berry, "was the coming of people who did not look upon the land as a homeland" (4).

If Berry's thesis is valid, we should be able to find evidence of such a mentality in the narratives and journals of America's first European colonists. In the following pages I will search for this evidence, focusing primarily on the writings of John Smith, founder of the Jamestown Colony, and William Bradford, the first governor and chief historian of the Plymouth Plantation. Unlike Berry, however, I will not limit my discussion to questions of land exploitation but will broaden it to include questions of animal and human exploitation as well.

Perhaps it would be helpful if I defined my terms. By "mentality" I mean a cast of mind, a set of attitudes, or a system of beliefs. As a term denoting a belief system, it is similar to "religion" and "philosophy," but unlike those terms it signifies beliefs that have not been enshrined in creed and dogma. The cluster of beliefs I call "Christian dualism," for example, is not central to Christianity, and one can be a Christian without subscribing to them. By "exploitation" I mean the unethical use of something for selfish purposes. The kidnapping and enslavement of Africans during America's antebellum period, the wholesale slaughter of the American buffalo during the 1860's, and the clearcutting of Appalachia's old growth forests during the 1890's are three good examples of exploitation in this sense of the word.

I will begin with John Smith, Jamestown's chief historian. Early in his *General History of Virginia*, published in 1624, seventeen years after the helped establish the colony, Smith makes this chilling observation. "It might well be thought a country so fair (as Virginia is) and a people so tractable would long ere this have been quietly possessed" (23).

He is addressing an audience of upperclass Englishmen. The first thing to note is that he is using the language of sexual conquest (fair, tractable, possessed) to describe military conquest. What he is saying about Virginia is what an aristocrat might say about a serving maid. She's young, she's desirable, and she's unprotected. Why hasn't someone long before this made her his concubine?

Note also that he places "a country so fair" and "a people so tractable" in the same category. Both are, to him, natural resources to be exploited, to be "quietly possessed." Why quietly? Because to do so loudly—with fanfare and publicity—would run the risk of involving England in a war with another European power. Besides, as any pirate knows, rape and plunder go better when the world isn't watching.

John Smith was a solider of fortune, a man well versed in the military arts. His statement makes it clear that from the very beginning he planned to conquer Virginia and enslave its Indians, just as Cortez had done in Mexico. Why did he have no qualms about possessing something that was not his? To answer this question, we must examine the cultural attitudes which conditioned his motives. Using a name from another, more well-established context, I will identify these attitudes as those of White European Supremacy.

First of all, being an Englishman and a loyal subject of the Crown, Smith believed that King James wielded power conferred upon him by God, and that this power gave the King the right to possess any lands he saw fit. This is the assumption of the Divine Right of Kings. Before sailing to Virginia, Smith and other organizers of the expedition had received from the King a patent giving them the right to claim the land in his name. Speaking of the difficulty the organizers had in obtaining this patent, Smith says:

> But nothing could be affected till by their (the organizers') great charge and industry it (the project) came to be apprehended by certain of the nobility, gentry, and merchants, so that his Majesty by his letters patent gave commission for establishing councils to direct here (England), and to govern and execute there (Virginia). (23, paren. added)

Secondly, being a God-fearing Christian, Smith believed that the Christian religion — or at least its Protestant variety —was vastly superior to that of the Indian, that the lands beyond the pale of Christendom (and some inside it) were ruled by the Devil, and that it was the duty of Christians to conquer and subdue such lands. In Genesis 1:28 God commands Adam and Eve to "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it." This attitude I shall call the God's Chosen People assumption. Like many modern Christians, Smith believed that the world was locked in a great struggle between the Godly and the Godless. Even among his fellow colonists he saw evidence of this conflict. During the voyage to America, he tells us, "some few, little better than atheists," began spreading lies about "Master Hunt, our preacher." Turning the other cheek, Hunt refused to answer the charges. Eventually, however, the "disastrous designs" of the atheists were foiled by Hunt's goodly exhortations" and "true devoted examples" of Christian charity (24).

Smith's narrative is replete with language associating the Indians with devils. Soon after Powhatan's men took him prisoner, he witnessed a dance during which the Indians yelled "hellish notes and screeches." During his detention in Powhatan's long-house, Smith was visited by a

"great grim fellow" with "a hellish voice," a shaman who performed a ritual designed to determine whether the Englishmen intended them "well or no." he was accompanied by "three more such like devils." While Smith sat on a mat in the middle of floor, "round about him those fiends danced a pretty while" (34-35).

Thirdly, as a soldier, surveyor and map-maker, Smith assumed that European technology was vastly, even laughably superior to anything the Indians had to offer. Even before he embarked on the expedition, he knew, from published reports, that America's natives had not advanced beyond the Stone Age, and that their bows and arrows were no match for his cannons and muskets. Obviously, this knowledge was central to the whole scheme. What is less obvious is that it gave Smith a stepping stone to another, more sinister one. If our weapons are superior to theirs, he reasoned, then God must have intended for us to conquer them. This, of course, is the assumption that Might Makes Right.

In his narrative this attitude isn't revealed by what Smith says but by what he does. Again and again, during his first encounters with the Indians, he frightens and intimidates them with well-timed demonstrations of European technological prowess. Consider, for example, the circumstances surrounding his capture. In the late fall of 1607, during his second exploration of the upper reaches of the James River, he was unexpectedly ambushed by "300 bowmen," who chased him when he attempted to return to his barge. During the chase he "slipped up to the middle in an oozy creek." "Near dead with cold," he then "threw away his arms." At that point the Powhatans "drew him forth and led him to the fire" (32).

Despite his dire predicament, Smith was not without stratagem. Asking for an audience with their chief, he waited until all eyes were on him. Then he showed the warriors his pocket compass. "Much they marveled at the playing of the fly and needle, which they could see so plainly and yet not touch it because of the glass that covered them." Then, holding the instrument up for all to see, he delivered an impromptu lecture on "the roundness of the earth and skies, the sphere of the sun, moon, and stars, and how the sun did chase the night round the world continually." During this performance the Powhatans "stood as amazed with admiration" (32).

Nevertheless, the warriors continued to prepare him for his execution, tying him to a tree and drawing their bows. At that point Chief Opechancanough raised the compass high in the air. Responding to the signal, the warriors laid down their weapons and escorted Smith to their chief's lodge, where he was "kindly feasted and well used" (32). The white man's magic had triumphed.

The Jamestown Colony was founded on May 13, 1607. On that first day, Smith tells us,

> Now falleth everyman to work, the Council to contrive the fort, the rest to cut down trees to make place to pitch their tents, some provide clapboard to reload the ships, some make gardens, some nets, etc. The savages often visited us kindly. (25)

In other words, even before they built their own dwellings the colonists began harvesting lumber for export to England. There the commodity was scarce, and in London markets clapboard—oak boards used by coopers to make barrel staves—fetched a handsome price. The high priority placed on logging shows that Jamestown was first and foremost a commercial enterprise, and that its financial backers expected a quick return on their investment. It was a pattern that would become a permanent feature of the modern capitalist economy: wholesale exploitation of old-growth forests for the short-term enrichment of the privileged few.

Although Virginia's oaks were soon put to good use, her Indians proved to be somewhat less tractable than Smith had hoped. In 1622, for example, they attacked Jamestown and massacred 347 of its 1250 inhabitants. From then on, the English waged all-out war against them, regularly attacking their villages and burning their crops. After a second massacre in 1644, the Powhatans, their numbers reduced by war and smallpox, were driven from the land they had cleared, confined to reservations, and forced to pay Jamestown an annual tribute of beaver pelts. In his *Planters and Pioneers: Life in Colonial Virginia*, Parke Rouse, Jr. says:

> By the time of the Revolution, Virginia's once-great Indian civilization was in fragments. The Powhatans had been reduced to two tribes, the Pamunky and the Mattaponi, whom Jefferson numbered at only fifteen men. (38)

However, efforts to enslave the Virginia Indian failed. Rouse says that "Unlike the easy-going African, he would not work the settlers' farms" (39). To enslave a man in his native environment is difficult, especially if he retains his own language, culture and personal identity. Men must be conditioned to slavery. Africans were "easy-going" precisely because they had been uprooted from their native lands, separated from their families, stripped of their language and culture, and brutalized during the Middle Passage. Not having the benefit of such treatment, Virginia's Indians made poor servants.

America's first European colonists invariably saw the continent as an inexhaustible storehouse of natural resources. During that first fall at Jamestown, says Smith,

> the rivers became so covered with swans, geese, ducks and cranes that we daily feasted with good bread, Virginia peas, pumpkins, putchamins, fish, fowl, and divers sorts of wild beasts as fast as we could eat them. (23)

Like most Europeans of his time, Smith believed that animals lacked souls, and that the only earthly creature so endowed was man himself. He also believed, on the basis of Genesis 1:26, that God had given man dominion over animals—over "the fish of the sea" and "the fowl of the air." He believed, in other words, that God had created the animal kingdom and all the creatures in it exclusively for man's benefit. This set of attitudes I shall call the Lords of Creation assumption.

Smith's history isn't the only early American narrative containing shocking examples of animal exploitation. In 1642, a Dutch minister,

Johannes Megapolensis, came to Rensselaerwyck, a Dutch settlement on the Hudson River, to preach to its farmers and convert its Indians. Two years later he published a description of the settlement, *A Short Account of the Mohawk Indians*. In his book Megapolensis marvels at the abundance of the American countryside. Strawberries are so plentiful that he can lie down in a field and eat his fill. Geese are so numerous that during spring and fall migrations, men stand in their dooryards and shoot them by the hundreds (Wright, 129).

Of all the Lords of Creation assumptions, the notion that animals lack souls is the most pernicious. Obviously, if animals lack souls, they may be slaughtered with impunity. In his great novel, *The Pioneers* (1823), James Fenimore Cooper describes the appalling ferocity with which our ancestors exterminated the Passenger Pigeon. Every April, during their northern migration, great rivers of this bird would flood the Susquehanna Valley. When the flocks would arrive, the settlers would devote an entire day to their destruction, killing them with pistols, "ducking guns" and cannons. Sometimes, to save ammunition, they knocked the birds out of the sky with poles (249). The last known specimen of this bird died in 1914 at the Cincinnati Zoological Garden.

It is a truism of American history that our Pilgrim forebears came to America not to enrich themselves but to escape religious persecution. This conception of the Pilgrim - as an individual of high ideals, deep faith, and rock-solid integrity began with William Bradford, the first governor and chief historian of the Plymouth Colony, whose book, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, has become the official version of the Pilgrim story. Although Bradford's manuscript wasn't published until two hundred years after his death, the curious history of the document itself clearly reveals that its version of events is the one which he wanted to hand down to posterity.

The manuscript was "handed down" in the most literal sense. Bradford began writing it in 1630, finished it in 1646, and, upon his death in 1657, bequeathed it to his son, William II. William II passed it to his son, John Bradford, who passed it in turn to his son Samuel. From Samuel Bradford the manuscript passed through the hands of Increase Mather, Cotton Mather, Samuel Sewall, and the Reverend Thomas Prince, who drew on it for his *Chronological History of New England* (Boston, 1736). From Prince's time until the 1770's the manuscript was kept in "The New England Library," a collection housed in the attic of Boston's Old South Church. When the British occupied Boston during the Revolution, the manuscript disappeared, and most scholars believe that it was removed form the premises by Governor Thomas Hutchinson, a Loyalist, before he fled to England in 1774. Hutchinson presumably gave it to the Bishop of London, because eighty years later an American Scholar, John T. Thornton, with the help of an obscure footnote, discovered that the manuscript was gathering dust in the library of Fulham Palace, the Bishop's traditional residence in London. After negotiations, it was finally returned to Boston in 1897 (Morrison xxvii-xxxix). In such manner does the history of a great country get preserved.

In Book I, Chapter IV of his history, Bradford lists five "weighty and solid reasons" why the Pilgrims decided to leave Holland and emigrate to America (23). First, they had found it very difficult to make a living on Dutch soil. Second, they wished to establish their own colony while they were still young enough and strong enough to do so. Third, they feared that, if they remained in Holland, their children would desert them and become Dutchmen. Fourth, they wished to do their duty as Christians and promulgate the gospel in a remote part of the world. Fifth, they feared that the Dutch would be conquered by the Spanish, whereupon the Pilgrims would be subjected to the barbarities of the Spanish Inquisition (24-25).

Seeking a place of refuge, the Pilgrims decided on America. Bradford describes their decision in these terms:

> The place they had thoughts on was some of those vast and unpeopled countries of America, which are fruitful and fit for habitation, being devoid of all civil inhabitants, where there are only savage and brutish men which range up and down, little otherwise than wild beasts of the same. (25)

The first thing we should note about this passage is that it contains an allusion to Job 1:7: "And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." Bradford's allusion shows quite clearly that he shared John Smith's belief that the American wilderness was the domain of the Devil, and that the Indians were his helpers. We should also note that Bradford is going to extraordinary lengths to persuade his audience that the Pilgrims came to a country that was uninhabited. Not only was it "unpeopled," it was "devoid of all civil inhabitants." These remarkable assertions notwithstanding, we know today, from archeological evidence, that hundreds of thousands of people were living on American soil when the Pilgrims arrived in 1620. For Bradford of course, this fact was beside the point, because he didn't classify Indians as people. On the contrary, they were "only savage and brutish men."

We also know that these "brutish men" weren't merely hunters and food-gatherers, ranging up and down the country like wild beasts. On the contrary, they lived in towns and villages, raised corn, squash and other crops, made pottery, and engaged in extensive trade with distant tribes. Marquette University anthropologist Alice B. Kehoe claims that the one of their towns, Cahokia, located near present-day East St. Louis, Illinois, boasted a population of 25,000 in 1100 A. D. and had a burial mound half the size of Teotihuacan's Pyramid of the Sun (162). To be sure, when the Pilgrims landed on Cape Code peninsula in 1620, they found that region to be somewhat sparsely inhabited, but only because its residents had been decimated by the white man's smallpox.

In the passage I have just quoted, Bradford expresses a strong bias against men who "range up and down" the countryside, against a culture based on hunting and food-gathering. To put it another way, he believed that farm-based cultures were superior to hunting and food-gathering cultures. This attitude has deep roots in the Judeo-Christian tradition. In

Genesis 1:28, for example, God commands Adam and Eve "to replenish the earth and subdue it," presumably by plowing it. In Genesis 3:23, after Adam and Eve suffer the Fall, God sends Adam forth from Eden "to till the ground from whence he was taken." Guided by such sanctions, Bradford believed that the Pilgrims, because they practiced agriculture more extensively than the Indians, were justified in appropriating Indian land. Under European ownership the land would become more productive. This set of beliefs I will call the Tillers of the Soil assumptions.

Howard Zinn, in his *People's History of the United States*, points out that when the Massachusetts Bay Colony was founded in 1630, its first governor, John Winthrop, issued a decree declaring Massachusetts to be a "vacuum" (13). He also decreed, that since the Indians hadn't "subdued" the land, they had only a natural right to it, not a civil right. In Winthrop's scheme of things, natural rights had no legal standing. When Puritan lawyers justified their seizure of Indian lands, they sometimes appealed to Psalms 2:8: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee, the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (14).

Like John Smith, Bradford and Winthrop believed that European Protestants had been chosen by God to conquer and subdue the American wilderness and bring its savages under the sway of Christian civilization. Although Bradford stops short of calling the Indians devils, he emphasizes that they are "cruel, barbarous and most treacherous" (26), and that they delight in tormenting their enemies by mutilating them or burning them alive. To be sure, the Indians of Massachusetts did engage in brutal practices, as the *Narrative of Mary Rowlandson* (London 1682) makes clear. They were probably as cruel as the English Catholics who, at Smithfield, England, in 1555, burned fifteen English Protestants because their opinions were not satisfactory to the Catholic Church. They may even have been as cruel as Captain John Mason, the Connecticut Puritan who torched a besieged fort and burned to death four hundred Indians during the Pequot War (Zinn 15). On the other hand, they were probably less cruel than the people who bombed Hiroshima.

In *Of Plymouth Plantation*, Bradford describes the Pilgrim's flight from Holland in these terms:

> So they left that goodly and pleasant city which had been their resting place near twelve years; but they knew they were pilgrims, and looked not much on those things, but lifted up their eyes to heaven, their dearest country, and quieted their spirits. (47)

Because he is writing for posterity and wants to ennoble the colony's founders, Bradford ignores the materialistic motive behind the settlement and stresses instead the spiritual one. Like Lot and his family fleeing the wickedness of Sodom, the Pilgrims "looked not much" on Leyden, but kept their eyes fixed on their heavenly destination. It is this image of the Pilgrim - the image of the high-minded heaven-seeker - which has become enshrined in the American cultural pantheon.

This emphasis on the spiritual is also seen in Bradford's description of the Pilgrims' first landfall on Cape Cod peninsula:

> Being thus arrived in a good harbor, and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees and blessed the God of Heaven who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean, and delivered them from all the perils and miseries thereof, again to set their feet on the firm and stable earth, their proper element. (61)

According to this version of the story, the official one, the country that confronted them that day was by no means a land of milk and honey. On the contrary, it was "a hideous and desolate wilderness, full of wild beasts and wild men". (62)

Because American historians have chosen to make it so, *Of Plymouth Plantation* is the book on which our modern conception of the Pilgrim is based. Only recently did I learn that another version of the Pilgrim story - an unofficial version, so to speak - has also survived. I am referring to *Mourt's Relation*, a book originally published in London in 1622. A facsimile edition of this work, with introduction and notes by Henry Martyn Dexter, was published in Boston in 1865. *Mourt's Relation* is a collection of five narratives describing the events that transpired during the first year of the Plymouth Colony, and although Bradford's name is not on the title page, he is unquestionably the author of the first and longest narrative. "Mourt" was the pseudonym of George Morton, chief agent of the Pilgrims in London, who himself emigrated to Plymouth in 1623.

Written for an upperclass English audience, *Mourt's Relation* differs from *Of Plymouth Plantation* like day differs from night. The latter book is somber, dignified, and overly abstract; the former is cheerful, animated, and chock-full of concrete details. The difference arises from a difference in intentions. The purpose of *Of Plymouth Plantation* was to glorify the founders of Plymouth in the eyes of posterity. The purpose of *Mourt's Relation*, however, was to lure prospective settlers to Plymouth and persuade wealthy Englishmen to invest in the enterprise.

Both books describe the landfall at Cape Cod, the subsequent exploration of the Cape Code peninsula, and the landfall at Plymouth beach. But what a difference in treatment! In *Of Plymouth Plantation*, Bradford omits mentioning the feelings of the Pilgrims when they got their first glimpse of America. In *Mourt's Relation*, however, the sighting is described in these terms: "The appearance of it much comforted us, especially seeing so goodly a Land, and wooded to the brink of the Sea" (2).

Scattered throughout *Mourt's Relation* are "catalogs of riches" designed to persuade cautious investors that the Plymouth experiment could reap enormous profits. In this book, when the Pilgrims look at Cape Code, they see no "hideous wilderness." On the contrary, they see a land "compassed about to the very Sea with Oaks, Pines, Juniper, Sassafras, and other sweet wood" (3). Moreover, says Bradford, "Every day we saw whales playing hard by us, which in that place, if we had instruments and a means to take them, we might have made a very rich return" (4).

Bradford's observation about the value of Cape Cod's whales was prophetic, and by the 1820s whaling had become New England's most lucrative industry. St. Jean de Crevecoeur, writing in 1782, noted that Nantucket, the seat of the New England whale fishery, possessed "above 200 sail of vessels," employed more than two thousand seamen, and boasted several citizens "worth 20,000£ sterling" (Norton 570). By Melville's time, in the 1840s, these figures had tripled. Today, of course, many of the species of whales which made Nantucket rich have been hunted to the brink of extinction.

On December 16, 1620, sixteen days after their first landfall on Cape Code, a period during which the Pilgrims explored the peninsula in a shallop, the Mayflower traversed Cape Cod Bay and anchored at Plymouth Beach. During the crossing Bradford saw two "fine Islands uninhabited, wherein are nothing but wood, Okes, Pines, Walnut, beech, Sassafras, Vines and other trees which we know not" (60). Several days prior to this, they had camped for one night on an island they subsequently named Clark's Island, after the Mayflower's first mate. According to Henry Martyn Dexter, the editor of the 1855 edition of *Mourt's Relation*, Clark's Island encompassed 86 acres in 1855. In ancient times, says Dexter, before the coming of the Europeans, the island had been covered with red cedar. After the founding of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, however, this timber had been cut down and "sold in Boston for gate-posts." In Dexter's day five or six of these trees were still standing, although they were in a "a gnarled and stunted condition." The largest was six feet in circumference and twenty feet high (58).

The evidence which I have so far presented suggests, I think, that the Pilgrims were somewhat more materialistic than Bradford's official history would have us believe. The evidence I am going to present now is even more damning. To the sensitive reader, the most shocking passages in *Mourt's Relation* are those in which Bradford describes how the Pilgrims looted Indian grain caches and burial mounds.

During their first exploration of the Cape Code peninsula, says Bradford, the Pilgrims "marched towards this supposed river" and came upon "a fine cleere Pond of fresh water." A little further on they found "much plaine ground, about fiftie Acres, fit for the Plow, and some signes where the indians had formerly planted their corne" (18-19). Next to this field they found "a little path" leading to "certain heapes" of sand:

> ...one whereof was covered with old Meadows, and had a wooden thing like a morter whelmed on the top of it, and an earthen pot layed in a little hole at the end thereof; we musing what it might be, digged and found a Bow, and, as we thought, Arrowes, but they were rotten; we supposed there were many other things, but because we deemed them graves, we put in the Bow againe and made it up as it was, and left the rest untouched, because we thought it would be odious unto them to ransacke their Sepulchers. (20)

A short distance from these graves they found the remains of a lodge, a ship's kettle, and a mound containing "36 goodly eares of corne." Because their supplies were running low, they decided to take the corn and "satisfie" the Indians for it at a later date (22).

In his official history, Bradford presents a different version of this incident, one which omits any mention of grave explorations. Unlike its counterpart in *Mourt's Relation*, this account is cast in the third person:

> Afterwards they . . . marched to this supposed river and by the way found a pond of clear, fresh water, and shortly after a good quantity of clear ground where the Indians had formerly set corn, and some of their graves. And proceeding further they saw new stubble where corn had been set the same year; also they found where lately a house had been, where some planks and a great kettle was remaining, and heaps of sand newly paddled with their hands. Which, they digging up, found in them divers fair Indian baskets filled with corn. (65, italics added)

During their second exploration of the peninsula, the Pilgrims found other grain caches, which they also appropriated. They also found another grave, and, despite their previous misgivings, "resolved to digge it up." In this second grave they found:

> ... a Matt, and under that a fayre Bow, and there another Matt, and under that a boord about three quarters long, finely carved and paynted, with three tynes, or broches on the top, like a Crown; also betweene the Meadows we found Boules, Trayes, dishes, and such like Trinkets; at length we came to a faire new Matt, and under that two Bundles, the one bigger, the other lesse, we opened the greater and found in it the bones and skull of a man. . . We brought sundry of the pretiest things away with us, and covered the Corps up again. (33-34)

Although Bradford doesn't say so in plain English, it is obvious to the modern reader that the interest the Pilgrims took in these graves was somewhat more than purely scientific. To put is bluntly, they were looking for gold. When none was found, they made do with "Boules, Trayes, Dishes, and such like Trinkets." In 1987 the Kentucky State Police discovered that treasure-hunters had looted 1200 ancient Indian graves located on a farm near Uniontown (Kaiser 6). In such ways do our ancient prejudices persist.

As we have seen, Bradford repeatedly emphasizes that the Indians are "savage and brutish men." Before the coming of the white man, he tells us, America was a land "devoid of all civil inhabitants" (OPP 25). With such statements he implies that the Pilgrims were justified in seizing Indian lands because they brought the light of civilization to "the person sitting in darkness." This I shall call the We're Civilized—You're Not assumption. However, considering his own admission that he and other Pilgrims robbed graves, Bradford's notion of what constitutes civilized behavior seems somewhat flawed. Benjamin Franklin believed that it was the other way around, that it was the white Europeans who were uncivilized, not the Indians. In

his witty essay, "Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America" (1784), he tells us that when Indians would come into colonial towns, the white would stare at them, "incommode them," and otherwise violate their privacy, behavior which Indians rightly considered to be rude and vulgar (517).

Finally, I want to compare Bradford's two accounts of the Pilgrims' first landing at Plymouth Beach. Here is the account contained in *Mourt's Relation*:

> On Munday we sounded the Harbour, and found it a very good Harbour for our shipping: we marched also into the Land, and found divers corne fields, and little running brookes, a place very good for situation, so we returned to our Ship againe with good news to the rest of our people, which did much comfort their hearts. (59)

Here is the account contained in *Of Plymouth Plantation*:

> On Monday they sounded the harbor and found it fit for shipping, and marched into the land and found divers cornfields and little running brooks, a place (as they supposed) fit for situation. At least it was the best they could find, and the season and their present necessity made them glad to accept of it. So they returned to their ship again with the news to the rest of their people, which did much comfort their hearts. (72)

The differences between these passages are striking. Note for instance, that in the first account the harbor and the place are "very good," but in the second they are merely "fit." Similarly, the "good news" of the first account has, in the second, been changed to "this news." Most strikingly, in the second passage a new statement appears: "At least it [Plymouth] was the best they could find." The effect of these changes is to eliminate the tone of excitement from the narrative and replace it with a tone that is somber, dignified and restrained.

"At least it was the best they could find." In this sentence Bradford implies that, since the Pilgrims' "dearest country" was heaven, the settlement of Plymouth was not all that significant. In a storm, as the saying goes, any port will do. However, the grave lootings and the catalogs of riches in his earlier account cast doubt on the sincerity of Bradford's otherworldly manner. If the Pilgrims frequently lifted their eyes to heaven, they were also quite capable of fixing them on Cape Cod's "excellent black earth, all wooded with Okes, Pines, Sassafras, Juniper, Birch, Holly, vines, Ash, and Walnut" (MR 10).

"The first and greatest American Revolution," says Wendell Berry, "was the coming of people who did not look upon the land as a homeland." For John Smith and William Bradford, America was not a homeland. It was, instead, a storehouse of natural resources prepared for them to exploit. If it was anything more than this, it was a concubine, a temporary refuge, a port in a storm. In fact, in their scheme of things nothing in the material world had absolute value. For them life was a kind of purgatory, a period of suffering for the soul to endure on its way to something better.

This, of course, is the Vale of Tears assumption, otherwise known as Christian dualism. For Smith and Bradford, existence was divided into two distinct realms, body and soul, matter and spirit. The devil ruled the former and God the latter.

For those who exploit America's natural resources, Christian dualism provides a convenient rationale, as it did for Smith and Bradford. If matter - the material world - is itself lacking in value, there need be no scruples about exploiting it. If trees are without souls, then we may destroy whole forests with impunity. If animals are without souls, then we may freely destroy whole species. If the earth itself is without a soul, then we may mine, drill, litter and pollute it as we please. But what if we are wrong? What if Walt Whitman is right, and "Objects gross and the Unseen Soul are One"?

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ZEN BUDDHISM, JAPANESE AESTHETICS, AND THE WESTERN TRADITION: THE NOTION OF IMPERMANENCE

Virginia M. Meyn and Patricia L. Boutelle

As multiculturalism becomes an issue of increasing significance and complexity in colleges across the country, one of the most important challenges we all face is to re-educate ourselves. How can we become sufficiently acquainted with the worldview of an unfamiliar culture so that we can then build bridges to our own?

This was the purpose of "Building Bridges," a National Endowment for the Humanities faculty development seminar held at Saddleback College in the summer of 1991. A series of intense and fascinating dialogues with scholars Ted Huters (University of California at Irvine) and Esperanza Ramirez-Christensen (University of Michigan), on classic texts of Chinese and Japanese literature respectively, alerted us to a single thread that continually reappeared in the literature as a leitmotif: the notion of impermanence in Buddhism, particularly in that form of Buddhism through which Taoism has rooted itself most creatively in Japan and has been best known in the West: Zen.

The notion of impermanence lies at the heart of Buddhist thinking and has been refined and emphasized in a very special way in Japan, where it is known as mujo, 'not eternal.' Japanese aesthetics is deeply tied to this worldview. The Japanese sense of beauty, for example, is heightened by the sense of fragility and evanescence of life (Lebra 166). The delicate, short-lived cherry blossoms serve as a frequent motif in the art, literature and film of Japan (e.g. the opening and closing scenes of *The Makioka Sisters*). Renku poets are required to make repeated references to cherry blossoms and the moon, to suggest that the moment of fullness (or emptiness) is ready to turn into its opposite. This is the meaning taught by the oldest classic in the world, the Chinese *Book of Changes*, which laid the foundation for Taoism.

At the heart of our experience of life, according to this view, should be the realization that everything is changing, is flowing like a river on which nothing solid can be built. Things have no core, no is-ness; they are empty. Once we truly experience and realize this primary fact, Buddhists believe, we are enlightened, and then we begin to live. But to have this realization, we must be jolted out of preconceptions about who we are, about the idea of 'self' we project (hence the Buddhist's notion of no-self or *anatman*).

And that is the task Zen Buddhism assigns itself: to "sever the knots of the intellect," to shock us out of thinking about is-ness or essence, in

order that we might "dive boldly and straightforwardly into the center of our being" and rise out of it again onto a plane where "there is only the showing of the flowers," to a plane of the mind where dualities no longer exist (Suzuki 28-9).

Our Western worldview — or at least the one we most commonly tend to express — makes it difficult for us to understand the Buddhist notion of impermanence, let alone communicate it to students, because our traditional notion of time is utterly different. Time is a stream we not only want to stop but feel committed to stop at the perfect moment which we idealize in image or verse, hoping to enshroud it in a solidity that will last forever. John Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn," the aesthetic reproduction of Platonic values, is a perfect example. Our most common orientation in the West tends toward an outward, not an inward, questing, toward yearning for a goal: more goods, more knowledge, even more life, which like Faust we strive to hold fast. Generally speaking, our notion of 'hero' is based on this concept. Hence we create a subject/object split which becomes expressed in the syntax of Western literature and art.

Because this split between subject and object, viewer and viewed, knower and known, fuels the tension and vitality in some of our greatest works and becomes positively value-laden, it is like a mote in our eye, preventing us from understanding and appreciating the Eastern worldview. Recognizing such basic mindsets in our own Western tradition, then, is the first step toward understanding the other.

Since the point of our N.E.H. seminars was to find ways of introducing non-Western ideas into the classroom, we developed this approach, using art history as our platform. First, we have our students look at some of the assumptions that underlie our traditional view of the world. Then we introduce principles of Japanese aesthetics, illuminated by both visual and verbal representations. In a final gesture of re-integration — the Western mind likes to circle back on itself! — we turn to two figures of the late nineteenth century celebrated in the Western aesthetic tradition as inovators in the use of their medium. The painter Edgar Degas consciously studied Japanese art, while the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, a Jesuit priest, knew nothing beyond his own faith. Yet both managed to alter traditional notions of time with a Zen-like effect which 'teases us out of thought' and invites us to participate in the 'flow' of experience, in what Bergson called 'real time'.

Defining the Western Canon

Historically, at least until the late nineteenth century, Western art was guided by an aesthetic canon grounded in the ideals of Greek and Roman antiquity. The prevailing ideals, sanctified by the Academy and illustrated by the works of such artists as Poussin and Ingres, suggest that art is a rational rather than an intuitive construct, exemplifying qualities of objectivity, symmetry, restraint, balance, order, and harmony. The artist is perceived as divine creator, as the conqueror of his materials and the keeper of the visible world.

Implicit in this rigid aesthetic is the insistence on the "objectness" of the representation. The notion of an objectified reality which is based on the way things appear in the material world creates the need for a perspective system giving priority to the viewer. The convention of perspective, unique to European art, "centers everything on the eye of the beholder." As the British art historian John Berger has noted, "[i]t is like a beam from a lighthouse — only instead of light traveling outwards, appearances travel in. The conventions called those appearances reality. . . . The visible world is arranged for the spectator as the universe was once thought to be arranged for God" (16). Western art, since the Renaissance, places the viewer in a privileged position.

The subject/object split is thus inherent in the syntax of Western art, as indeed even of language. The viewer is separated by an artificial construct, the represented reality framed like a window through which he/she looks into another world. Between the natural world of landscape and the viewer is a permanent barrier. A hierarchy of subject matter determines what he/she sees, from "high" themes of classical mythology to "low" themes of still life.

The goal of Western art has been to objectify and concretize the ideals of the Western tradition, expressed through Plato's postulation of another different and superior order. The object reflects and glorifies those ideals — a complete and perfect moment, frozen in time, captured permanently for the benefit of the beholder.

The Japanese Aesthetic

In contrast to the relatively rigid strictures of the Western aesthetic canon, the Japanese aesthetic is fluid and dynamic. There is no barrier between viewer and object. The viewer is a part of the created world, which is indeterminate — represented by spontaneous and suggestive brush strokes (calligraphy or haiku, for example). The viewer is in fact necessary to its completion; they are interdependent.

The underlying principle which explains this relationship is a central thought in Buddhism, linked to the notion of impermanence and most forcefully emphasized in Zen. It is the philosophy of emptiness. All things are produced relative to something else, they come into being through circumstance (have dependent origination). Hence they are devoid of a 'self-hood'. Everything in the world is a relative structure and an operational complex. Things are such and such only in relation to so and so in a particular frame of reference. Buddhists speak of the "suchness" of things, as opposed to that idea of a thing we take for real and enduring. In contrast to the basic tenets of Western philosophy (Plato), there are no independent and irreducible entities whatsoever in the Buddhist view, only structures and events, only process. "Things do not exist; only events exist momentarily under relative conditions" (Chang 81). This is how we actually experience reality when the intellect does not impose itself on the process (one is reminded of Bergson's *durée réelle* and of the perspective of quantum

physics much discussed in current books like *The Cosmic Code* and *The Tao of Physics*.

The aim of Zen Buddhism is to let go, to let flow; to provide a liberation from deep-rooted attachment to a "delusory self which is the source of all passion-desires and their resultant pains and frustrations" (Chang 75). "Having seen the reality of interdependence and entered deeply into that reality," a modern Zen master has noted, "nothing can oppress [one] any longer. [One] is liberated" (Thich Nhat Hanh 49). As such, Zen succeeds also in providing a liberation from ordinary social conventions. It places "supreme importance on the unpretentious and the seemingly artless," on the spontaneous (Kato 13). This view was fully integrated into the art and literature of Japan.

Perhaps the best example of this integration is the tea ceremony, or *chanoyu*, a ritual said to crystallize the cultural life of Japan and to constitute a kind of Zen meditation leading to self-liberation.

"The tea-room (the Sukiya, meaning 'artless') does not pretend to be other than a mere cottage, a straw hut" (Okakura 75). Evanescence is suggested in the thatched roof, the frailty of slender pillars, the lightness in bamboo support, and an apparent carelessness in the use of commonplace materials (86). This hut is known as the Abode of the Unsymmetrical, "consecrated to the worship of the Imperfect, purposely leaving something unfinished for the play of the imagination to complete" (76), or the Abode of Vacancy, a place devoid of ornamentation or sensuous effect except for a few items that meet the aesthetic mood of the moment and the season: a crack in the teapot, for example, an irregularly formed tea bowl, a slender spray of wild cherries (the promise and simultaneous passing of spring). The items are so arranged that there is neither repeated motif nor symmetrical order. Everything reflects change.

In keeping with the philosophy of 'emptiness', each person entering the room "sheds as far as possible all symbols of social rank and role" (Kato 157), dropping the "borrowed" identity from the outside world at the threshold after a preliminary meditation in the garden. All attention is on the moment and on the immediacy of the experience. Zen is a liberation from time. There is no other time but this instant.

In the still space of the tea-room, life is transformed into art; indeed, life and art become one.

Japanese Painting and Poetry

There are two forms of painting which illustrate this aesthetic system: Sumi-e and Sung landscapes. Sumi-e is an abstract calligraphic style of painting in which black ink washes of expressive quick and spontaneously varied line come to suggest a natural form. These light and fluid strokes move across the space "more like a dance than a writing on paper" (Watts 178).

Sung landscape paintings emphasize the life of nature — of mountains, waters, mists, rocks, trees and birds — as felt by Taoism and Zen

(Watts 178). Man is very much a part of this world, but he does not dominate; "it is sufficient to itself, for it was not made for anyone and has no purpose of its own" (178).

One of the most important features of these two painting styles is the "relative emptiness of the picture — an emptiness which appears, however, to be a part of the painting and not just the unpainted background" (179).

Emptiness is also a significant aesthetic component of haiku and renku poetry, which, with a few well chosen images, expresses the evanescence of life in a simple scene of nature with an immediacy characteristic of Zen:

> Blooming by the lane
> A rose mallow — and it has been
> Devoured by the horse! (Ueda 49)

> The old pond —
> A frog leaps in,
> And a splash. (Ueda 53)

These two haiku are by Basho, foremost among haiku poets (1644-94). Lightly and artlessly, in seventeen syllables, he juxtaposes the infinite (first line) and the finite (second line), the eternal or general and the now. Haiku must contain two elements or "poles between which the spark will leap" for it to be effective as a flash "perception of truth" (Keene 40).

The subject is ordinary, the experience commonplace. The poet merely points to the scene. Haiku sees things in their "suchness," without commentary, without purpose, "as from the surface of a clear lake there leaps suddenly a fish" (Watts 132). We are to experience "a silence of the mind in which one does not 'think about' the poem but actually feels the sensation which it evokes — all the more strongly for having said so little" (Watts 183). The listener is invited to participate:

> Along the mountain road
> Somehow it tugs at my heart:
> A wild violet. (Ueda 49)

Here, as a rare exception, the poet does comment, but his comment ("Somehow it tugs at my heart") is general and vague so that the reader is able to enter into the experience. We find ourselves travelling along a lonely mountain road, suddenly surprised by a tiny purple violet that brightens the desolate path (Ueda 49).

Hear Basho's own comment on this process, as recorded by one of his disciples in The Sanzoshi:

> 'Learn about the pine tree from the pine tree, learn about the bamboo from the bamboo', meaning detach your mind from your own personal self. . . . To learn is to enter into the object

> and perceive its subtle life, whereupon a poem forms itself. Although one may describe an object lucidly, if the feeling does not spontaneously emerge from the object itself, then oneself and the object become two [separate entities], and the poetic feeling does not attain to truth. It is merely an artifical composition arising from the poet's personal self. (Saizo 398-99)

Thus one lets go of expectation and purpose to experience more fully the timeless, unhurried flow of life.

Renga or renku poetry, for which Basho is again the classic example, expresses even more than haiku the mutability of all things in their timeless flow. Renku is a poem of multiple authorship, normally consisting of 36, 50 or 100 verses contributed by a team of poets in an extemporaneous chain which follows specific rules. Its very form demonstrates impermanence in that it has no center (it is often compared with a river as opposed to a circle), no beginning, middle or end, and no single predetermined topic. It demonstrates the Buddhist notion of no-self, revealing that things have no solid core; that they come into being through circumstance. The following excerpt from a longer renku called "The Summer Moon" briefly illustrates these principles:

Smells float
Over the streets of town:
the summer moon.

Boncho

My, it's hot, My, it's hot,
voices cry at every door.

Basho

The second weeding's
barely done, and already the
rice stalks are in ear.

Kyorai

Thump, thump, the ashes fall:
a slat of dried sardine.

Boncho

In these parts, they've
never even heard of coins —
what inconvenience!

Basho

See him try to swagger
with that enormous sword!

Kyorai

A clump of grass:
he freezes as a frog leaps
in the evening dark.

Boncho

On the way to pick butterburr shoots,
the shaking lantern goes out.

Basho (Kinjiro 463-65)

The poem begins with a haiku by Boncho describing lively town life on a summer evening; the focus is 'up'. Basho contributes the next two lines, which complement the previous verse; the scene is the same but the focus this time is on the ground and closer to the human element. Kyorai now adds his verse to Basho's in complementary fashion, continuing the hot summer night but changing the scene from town to country. It is important to note that the immediately preceding verse is always read first, then the one just added. The former provides the theme for the one that follows, which then complements it. There should be no attempt to reach back to pick up any motifs or to look forward. Thus the poem "grows," emphasizing the momentary and the spontaneous.

Edgar Degas

At first glance, because his compositions appear to be boldly calculated, one would not associate Edgar Degas with notions of the momentary or the spontaneous. Indeed, "no art," said Degas, "was ever less spontaneous than mine" (Sullivan 217). Degas was driven to analyze his visual experiences intellectually, and it is this tendency which dramatically sets him apart from the other impressionists. Ironically, his rigorous analytical approach to his art set him free to investigate *le moment actuel*, the impermanence of experience, and create a lively presentation of movement like no other Western artist before him.

Though he was grounded in the classicism of the Northern Italian Renaissance and the neoclassicism of Ingres, Degas was not a stagnant academic appropriator of past forms. Rather, he believed that art was the result of the transformation of the thing seen into the thing experienced. His studies of the classical tradition and his admiration for Japanese Ukiyo-e woodcuts convinced him that space is not so much an attribute of form as the arena in which form is most completely experienced. It is not surprising, then, that Degas attempted to resolve the traditionally difficult problems of Western painting in new and unexpected ways which owed much to his interest in the Japanese print.

Degas first began collecting Japanese art in 1862. Eventually he amassed a large collection that included important prints by Utamaro Hokusai, Hirosige and Sukenobu. These artists practiced a style known as Ukiyo-e, or 'pictures of the floating world', a realistic style emphasizing the transient, rapidly changing nature of contemporary life. Ukiyo-e evolved as an "art of the city" during the Edo period of transition into modern culture.

Where Zen tradition had held sacrosanct the subject of nature, in Ukiyo-e the subject matter portrays the activities of everyday life, especially the world of pleasure and the theater. According to Dufwa, "this profane art was largely devoted to woman at her daily task or as the object of man's desire" (20).

While Ukiyo-e brought with it a dramatic new emphasis on secular contemporary life, it still retained the traditional stylistic features of Zen art. As such, the distinguishing characteristics of Ukiyo-e include a rhythmic composition based on an asymmetrical construction, a perspective which emphasized the foreground with an unexpected immediacy and a subtle expressive value of line.

The Ukiyo-e emphasis on the subject matter of contemporary life was not unfamiliar to Degas. This emphasis was prevalent among such writers as Charles Baudelaire, Emile Zola and Edmond Duranty, who were advocates of a new realism which would transform "tradition and attempt to translate the modern world" (Duranty 4). Degas enthusiastically embraced Ukiyo-e and chose to focus on *la vie moderne*, an everyday reality which was alive and changing.

Degas' art shared with the masters of the Japanese prints more than just a detached interest in modern life. His work also shared many of the same stylistic qualities of the Ukiyo-e prints, most especially a strongly contrasting configuration of elements and an asymmetrical organization, a seemingly random cutting and a perspective governed by the artist's viewpoint. These qualities helped Degas achieve a pictoral form with a "direct reference to the incompleteness of a creative artist's work" (Dufwa 94), thus emphasizing the movement of time as a continuum, Bergson's *durée réelle*, something immediately experienced as alive and ongoing. The means employed by Degas are the same used by the Japanese artists, making use of chance to show how the theme appears to our eyes at a given moment:

> This 'now' which the Japanese Zen Buddhist attempts to capture in his haiku or ink painting, seems to have been felt by Degas to be a fleeting moment in time. The form in which Degas has chosen to concretize a visual experience enables the beholder to retrieve repeatedly this moment, this 'now', with a sense of immediacy. (Dufwa 94)

A brief analysis of some works by Degas will illustrate this point. Compare Degas' pastel portrait of 1867, *Marie Lucie Millaudon*, with a painting by Koryusai Isoda, *Courtesan and Her Attendant*, 1766. Both focus on two women at leisure. Each one is presented in an extreme vertical format. The radical, seemingly spontaneous cutting of each work helps to suggest the momentariness of the scene. The Degas drawing makes the viewer feel as someone only passing by and just able to catch a glimpse of the women in the gallery, while the courtesan and her attendant appear to be moving through the narrow picture plane. Both artists use strong contrasts of juxtaposed color to heighten the internal rhythmic dynamic of the compositions.

The dance theme is especially helpful in illustrating Degas' notion of impermanence because of the nature of dance as rhythmic movement played in the arena of space and time. Two ballet studies illustrate Degas' understanding of the Zen Buddhist notion of the "now:" *The Orchestra of the Opera*, 1868, and *Dancers in the Rehearsal Room*, 1887. In both, Degas employs a subtle diagonal to divide the painting horizontally. In *The Orchestra of the Opera*, the real subject is the bassoonist in the foreground, a friend of Degas'. He, however, also acts as an important link to the ballet simultaneously being performed in the background. Degas has purposely positioned the bassoonist on the diagonal grid of the painting; this grid guides the viewer's eye to the head of the double bass and finally back to the ballet. The dance, its essential community with music, its abstract character and its temporal dimension are vividly expressed in this scene. The viewer is not bound by external motifs in space; here the music is communicated in the form of dance. Finally, in *Dancers in the Rehearsal Room*, the timelessness of experience is expressed in an asymmetrical composition which emphasizes the emptiness as much as it does the activities of the corps de ballet.

Degas' work liberated the viewer from the conventions of western art. The viewer is no longer separated from the experience. The formal qualities Degas appreciated in Japanese prints made it possible for him to endow his work with a new significance wherein the moment is made visible.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

Unlike Degas, the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins knew nothing of Zen Buddhism, but his works share qualities remarkably 'Zen' in one's experience of them. Hopkins was an English Jesuit, a convert to Catholicism who lived at the height of the Victorian period and died in Dublin in 1889 at the age of forty-four. It was not until 1915 that the first edition of his collected poems was published. His unconventional idiom and absolute sincerity startled and sometimes estranged the English reading public. But as his letters and journals were published, his poems came to be recognized as works of genius. He is one of the greatest of our modern poets. Here we will look briefly at both his poetry and his journal and letters.

Like Degas, Hopkins had endeavored to transform "the thing seen into the thing experienced," where the barrier between subject and object seems to fade away. This might be perceived as unusual for a Christian poet whose religious experience is deeply tied to his verse, if one considers that the Christian perspective tends toward the expression of a subject/object polarity, a reflective subject yearning for and commenting on an object beyond one's grasp. Hopkins himself was aware of this tendency in others, as his comment on Wordsworth's sonnets implies: "beautiful as those are they have an odious goodness and neckcloth about them that half throttles their beauty" (quoted in Pick, *Reader* 29).

When one reads Hopkins (and he wished to be read aloud), one enters into a flow of sounds out of which images seem to spring with Zen-like immediacy, jolting the reader out of thought into the 'moment made visible'. The first stanza of his famous "Windhover" illustrates that experience:

I caught this morning's minion, king-

dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon,

in his riding

Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and

striding

High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing

In his ecstasy! then off, off forth on swing,

As a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend: the

hurl and gliding

Rebuffed the big wind. . . . (*Reader* 50)

These first seven lines of the opening eight-line stanza of Hopkins' sonnet variation are contained in a single sentence ruled by the gazing subject 'I': "I caught [sight of] . . . morning's minion. . . ." The ellipsis ("sight of" is implied) concretizes the moment of perception and places subject and object, man and bird in direct and immediate relationship. What in fact did the man 'see' or 'catch', in the figurative sense of 'grasp'? The sonorous repetition of verbal nouns and 'ing' sounds at places of emphasis throughout the long seven-line sentence describing the bird evokes the activity of soaring. Thus the subject has "caught" — in this case, has been caught up by — the soaring. A single statement concluding the stanza expresses an urgency that reflects the extent to which the poet has been overcome by the image of the falcon's mastery of the air: "My heart in hiding / Stirred for a bird,—the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!"

The poet's gaze "explodes" in the second stanza into an imperative; the bird's soaring is transmuted into an image suggestive of Christ in

his moment of sacrifice: "Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume, here / Buckle!, and the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion / Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier!" In the third and final stanza the image is once again transformed, this time into that of a plow turning over the soil: "No wonder of it: sheer plod makes plough down sillion / Shine, and blue-beak embers, ah my dear, / Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermilion" (*Reader* 50).

The poet-subject is not mentioned at all in the last two stanzas, though he continues to 'grasp' the moment with his interjected "No wonder," "ah my dear." The simple concluding image of the plow's movement suggests the fusion not only of the poet-subject with the object of his perception but of the world of spirit with nature, of the invisible with the visible, of the eternal with the moment.

Hopkins accomplished his seemingly spontaneous verse by a disciplined, and in his own words "very highly wrought," crafting techniques he called "inscape" and "instress."(*Reader* 25)

Inscape refers to the 'suchness' rather than the 'isness' of a thing, deriving its 'suchness' from the poet's attempt to let a thing spontaneously reveal itself through its action of doing, through its characteristic activity, as demonstrated in the "Windhover" poem above. The following lines from another poem are designed specifically to describe that process: "As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies dráw fláme; / As tumbled over rim in roundy wells / Stones ring" (Reader 67). Whatever is not part of that characteristic activity is peeled away until a kind of distilled essence remains. An image in Hopkins' journal, "chestnuts as bright as coals or spots of vermilion," becomes in his poem "Pied Beauty," "fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls" (Reader 90; cf. 20-23): "Glory be to God for dappled things— / For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow; / For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim; / Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings . . . " (*Reader* 50).

Hopkins' subject is usually nature, which he experienced as a multiplicity of polarities, of things contradictory and opposite resolved into an indivisible and ever-changing whole. The last five lines of "Pied Beauty" dramatize this experience:

> All things counter, original, spare, strange;
>
> Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
>
> With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
>
> He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
>
> Praise him. (*Reader* 51)

In an attempt to express that experience, Hopkins applied a technique he called "instress" and in particular "sprung rhythm":

> Why do I employ sprung rhythm at all? Because it is the nearest to the rhythm of prose, that is the native and natural rhythm of speech, the least forced, the most rhetorical and emphatic of all possible rhythms, combining, as it seems to me, opposite and, one would have thought, incompatible excellences, markedness of rhythm — that is rhythm's self — and naturalness of expression. (*Reader* 25)

Sprung rhythm reinforces the aim of inscape, enabling the meaning to "explode," to use Hopkins' word (*Reader* 27), and jolting us out of expected patterns through scanning by accents on stresses alone (regardless of the number of syllables in between) as well as through an ingenious use of alliteration, subject/object inversion, ellipsis and the coinage of new words and word-compounds which often fuse nouns and verbs.

Such techniques break down the traditional barrier between subject and object. This is especially evident in the opening lines of his poem "Spring and Fall: To a Young Child": "Márgarét, are you grieving / Over Goldengrove unleaving? / Leáves, like the things of man, you / With your fresh thoughts care for, can you?" (*Reader* 66). Thus Hopkins' images take on a freshness, a fluidity and immediacy, as the poem "The Grandeur of God" joyfully declares in its opening lines: "The world is charged with the grandeur of God. / It will flame out, like shining from shook foil . . ." (*Reader* 47).

"You must know," Hopkins noted in a letter to his friend Robert Bridges about one of his poems, "that words like 'charm' and 'enchantment' will not do: the thought is of beauty as of something that can be physically kept and lost and by physical things only, like keys . . ." (quoted in *Reader* 22). For both Hopkins and Degas, words and images were "like keys." They do not stand for something else, they are, in the same way that "Each mortal thing does one thing and the same: / Deals out that being indoors each one dwells; / Selves—goes itself; **myself** it speaks and spells, / Crying **"Whát I dó is me: for that I came"** (*Reader* 67). Things that 'are' in that sense pass away. Words and images, like physical things, are temporary charges of a life force which is eternal. Hopkins and Degas seem to have understood this. Their art replicates the experience of both the passing and the continuum of time.

To mourn the passing of time is understandable and inevitable, but such is the nature of spring and summer that they come and go and come again. To mourn is to mourn ourselves, as the last six lines of "Spring and Fall" tell us:

> Now no matter, child, the name:
> Sorrow's springs are the same.
> Nor mouth had, no nor mind, expressed
> What heart heard of, ghost guessed:
> It is the blight man was born for,

It is Margaret you mourn for. (*Reader* 66)

Both Hopkins and Degas mastered their medium in ways that permit the reader/viewer to bridge the gap between the reasoning mind and the feeling heart, at that point where life and death, loss and gain are experienced as one and the same. There it is perceived that when a flower dies, another appears; nature balances and re-balances. The notion of impermanence, laden as it is with universal sorrow, is also the way of joy: "And for all this," Hopkins concluded in "The Grandeur of God," "nature is never spent; / There lives the dearest freshness deep down things" (Reader 48).

The revelation of the beauty and sadness of life lies at the heart of Japanese culture. We find its echo in our own hearts as well, through the works of poets and artists who have responded deeply to the human condition. Our task as educators is to recognize such connections between cultures, the shared experiences which makes us human, and find ways to demonstrate them as we continue to acknowledge and appreciate our differences. It was with this purpose in mind that the N.E.H. faculty seminars were designed, and with gratitude we dedicate these pages to their leaders.

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HUMANATURE: THE DEEP ECOLOGY OF WRITING

Joe Napora

There are things
We live among 'and to see them
Is to know ourselves'.

Occurrence, a part
Of an infinite series.

George Oppen (9)

PREFACE

This essay is not presented as a polemic, not intended as opposition to a position taken by any one writer or group of writers. I have, however, chosen David Ehrenfeld's "The Conservation Dilemma" as representative of the position of writers who blame humanism for the ecological crises of our time. Ehrenfeld warns against any justification for the preservation of nature based on human use because such justification can easily be turned the other way: if we defend nature because of utility, even future utility, the same argument of utility will be invoked to destroy nature. To place nature beyond the category of utility Ehrenfeld, instead, invokes religion (quoting Charles S. Elton): "The first [reason for conservation], which is not usually put first, is really religious" (207).

My essay is presented to suggest that Ehrenfeld is wrong on two counts. First, a 'fall' into the sacred does not, by itself, provide a solid base upon which to establish conservation. Unless what is seen as sacred is experienced as being integral to being human, the use of the sacred as a defense will only further marginalize nature. We won't make the necessary effort to save nature unless we realize that we are not separate from it, that saving it is saving ourselves. My second point, and the focus of this essay, is that the most human activity of writing, which lies at the root of the humanism Ehrenfeld wants to replace, offers the best possibility for such a realization.

TRANSLATION

Writing is itself an act of translation, taking the confusing whirl of transient thought and making it into a world upon a page, a world that allows for the participation of the other, the sympathetic reader, if it is constructed with care and craft. Journal writing is a special kind of writing; the nature journal is a special kind of journal. And writing the nature journal is a special kind of translation.

I am not a nature writer, nor am I an avid journal writer. I am an observant reader of nature journals. And this reading makes it possible for

me to be an observant reader of nature. But reading, like writing, is not primarily an act producing a product; it is being engaged in a process. Though it has a beginning, it has no ending. It is a continual refining of perception and participation. But I am convinced that it is this process, the reading and the writing, more than any other human activity, which makes it possible for us to perceive and participate in nature, helping us heal the split we all experience between our selves and this larger process we call nature.

Journal writing is both a record of experience and a creation of it: journal writing is a discovery that there is no it separate from the translation into the permanence daily writing makes of experience. Journal writing is essentially a time-bound activity revealing the writer's relationship to place through making a permanent record of constant change. This recording activity creates the long view of the relationship of the human as not separate from the processes of nature.

Journal writing is writing for an audience both private and public, the self interior and the self in the world. It is the closest writing comes to speaking; and this speaking to one's self is an act of self-disclosure and an ongoing refinement of the act of observation possible only through time. Gertrude Stein, a writer not often considered a nature writer but who most certainly was an accurate observer of human nature, signals as much with her observation that this dual activity inward and out into the world is what it means to be alive. And with her emphasis on language completing the picture of what a person does and is, and her emphasis on language unfolding and folding back upon itself through time, it is appropriate to my essay that she wrote her observations within a text she called "Portraits and Repetitions":

> One may really indeed say that that is the essence of genius, of being most intensely alive, that is being one who is at the same time talking and listening. (170)

Or as Henry Thoreau expressed the same idea but more succinctly:

> "Says I to myself" should be the motto of my journal.
>
> (*Journals*, Nov. 11, 1851, 44)[1]

A PLACE TO STAND

> Last sunset, last twilight, last stars of December. And so this year comes to an end, a year rich in the small, everyday events of the earth, as all years are for those who find delight in simple things. There is, in nature, a timelessness, a sturdy, undeviating endurance, that induces the conviction that here we have a place to stand. All around us are the inconstant and the uncertain. The institutions of men alter and disintegrate. Conditions of life change overnight. The thing we see today, tomorrow is not. But in the endless repetitions of nature — in the recurrence of spring, in the lush new growths that replace the old, in the coming of new birds to sing the ancient songs, in the continuity of

> life and the web of the living — here we find the solid foundation that, on this earth, underlies at once the past, the present and the future.
>
> (Teale, *Seasons* 259.)

We have here the image of a man who, by writing his observations of nature, establishes his own place in it, his "place to stand." His fragmented beginning (the incomplete sentence opening this observation) mirrors all authentic beginnings. And he ends with a long accumulation of prepositions that position him in relationship to both nature and his own writing: the "shadow" cast by his finding his place to stand. Writing is the shadow self, a darkness measuring us, a compliment to the other that makes for a totality we can call the true self.

Teale's statement invokes the image of the gnomon, a measuring device, a time-bound measure, even the image of a pen, a writing instrument casting a shadow, the print recording this measure. To directly present the same idea to the reader, Ezra Pound in his *Cantos* uses the Chinese ideogram chih 3, gnomon — start from" (Cookson 57). As the poet says: "A gnomon / Our science is from the watching of shadows" (543). Teale makes of himself the instrument of science, and the sweep of his shadow has encompassed the whole of the year. He comes to know who he is by knowing where he stands. What better reason, perhaps the only reason, to study nature, which is, after all, the study of self?

It is curious that by looking outward to the natural world we also look inward. When we know where we stand we can under-stand that, though all about us revolve the seasons, nature, time itself, we are not the center of all. This awareness can be a source of some distress. It is curious, a paradox, that we know who we are to the degree that we study what we are not; and the contradiction becomes apparent the more we immerse ourselves in nature through the writings of nature. We learn that we are the measurer and the measured, singularly ourself when we realize that we are but a part of the all.

Another poet gives us a clue about how writing flows from this awareness. Charles Olson, in "Projective Verse," reminds us that there is a danger inherent in literacy, that print estranges us from nature and ourselves. To write poetry, to write anything at all of value, we need to get back to the instrument, the person knowing where s/he stands: "It starts with the composer...." The composer makes music of writing through a recognition of the self as part of nature:

> It comes to this: the use of a man, by himself and thus by others, lies in how he conceives his relation to nature, that force to which he owes his somewhat small existence. If he sprawl, he shall find little to sing but himself, and shall sing, nature has such paradoxical ways, by way of artificial forms outside himself. But if he stays inside himself, if he is contained within his nature as he is participant in the larger force, he will be able to listen, and his hearing through himself will give him secrets objects share. (60)

Discovering the "secrets objects share" is the work of any nature writer. In "A Place to Stand" Teale reminds us that our participation in the larger force of nature is an ongoing one, one made possible through the writing itself, the writing extending our awareness throughout the days of the year. Such awareness comes from the recognition of one's place as part of "an infinite series," the recurring encounter with nature that has no existence other than process, a process that George Oppen (9) reminds us is the way, the only way, to really see things, the things that will also make self-knowledge possible. To see things the way the poet asks us to is to first accept the need for seeing all experience as time-bound, bound through our participation in objects' occurrence.

Teale's final entry is the end of his year's observation and the beginning of another, another year for himself, but also the beginning of our next year's observation — for his writings have changed us, have allowed us our own creative recording. His writings are our beginnings: "All around us are the inconstant and the uncertain" (259).

This awareness of the essential flux of nature and of our need to make of this flux something permanent is a new absolute, as fundamental to our human nature as is anything — and it is writing that makes both the awareness and the record of that awareness possible. The approach of Teale and Olson and Oppen is similar to that of the Zen Buddhists who describe this openness to change as the "beginner's mind" (Suzuki).

Keeping the "instrument" tuned requires a recognition of the responsibility inherent in the act of writing; keeping the writer open to experience keeps the writer from subsuming thought to systems exterior to the experience itself. Olson is insistent on this point: the writer has surrendered too much too often to forces outside of the self, and the result has been evasion and self-deception.

> I fall back on a difference I am certain the poet at least has to be fierce about: that he is not free to be a part of, or to be any sect; that there are no symbols to him, there are only his composed forms, and each one solely the issue of the time of the moment of its creation, not any ultimate except what he in his heart and that instant in its solidity yield. That the poet cannot afford to traffick in any other "sign" than his one, his self, the man or woman he is. Otherwise God does rush in. And art is washed away, turned into that second force, religion. (19)

Thoreau is equally adamant that we "front" the facts of nature by remaining true to our self, a self connected with nature through writing because writing is the way we remove conditioning, a way we resist the forces making our place within nature a religious (or economic or political) act rather than simply — and essentially — a human one.

Thoreau advocates a kind of de-programming of uncritically received wisdom. And we do this through writing:

> It is when we forget all our learning that we begin to know. I do not get nearer by a hair's breadth to any natural objects so long as I presume that I have an introduction to it from a learned man.

> To conceive of it with a total apprehension I must for the thousandth time approach it as something totally strange. (*Journals*, Oct. 4, 1859, 199)

Developing this "unlearnedness," this beginner's mind, depends less on seeing new things than on seeing the same things anew. In fact, seeing new things makes really seeing (Olson's "sharing the secrets") almost impossible. As Thoreau reminds us:

> I am afraid to travel much or to famous places lest it might complete dissipate the mind. Then I am sure that what we observe at home, if we observe anything, is of more importance than what we observe abroad. The far-fetched is of the least value. (*Journals*, Jan. 30, 1852, 54)

The journal is a true journey if we stay at home. The true journey is the one that throws us, as writers, back onto ourselves, that keeps the force of our writing— which is also a force of nature — contained within the activity. The "far-fetched" removes the emphasis of our writing out away from the self. What we "observe at home" keeps the emphasis on the act of writing, on style. Charles Olson saw the misplaced emphasis on forces outside of the self as infecting modern poetry, and in his poetry reminded us to be buddhas of the imagination:

> In the land of plenty, have
> nothing to do with it
> take the way of
> The lowest,
> including your legs, go
> contrary, go
>
> sing
>
> (Maximus I,9)

Both the poet and the nature writer insist on this homely truth: "homely things" are true only after you get to them ("including your legs") through the self humbled before the things of nature:

> It is well to find your employment and amusement in simple and homely things. These were best and yield most. I think I would rather watch the motions of these cows in their pasture for a day...than wander to Europe or Asia and watch other motions there; for it is only ourselves that we report in either case, and perchance we shall report a more restless and worthless self in the latter case than in the first. (Shepard 165)
>
> Men commonly exaggerate the theme. Some themes they think are significant and others insignificant. I feel that my life is very homely, my pleasures very cheap. Joy and sorrow, success and

> failure, grandeur and meanness, and indeed most words in the English language do not mean for me what they do for my neighbors. I see that my neighbors look with compassion on me, that they think it is a mean and unfortunate destiny which makes me to walk in these fields and woods so much and sail on this river alone. But so long as I find here the only real elysium, I cannot hesitate in my choice. My work is writing, and I do not hesitate, though I know that no subject is too trivial for me, tried by ordinary standards; for, ye fools, the theme is nothing, the life is everything. All that interests the reader is the depth and intensity of the life excited. We touch our subject but by a point which has no breadth, but the pyramid of our experience, or our interest in it, rests on us by a broader or narrower base. That is, man is all in all, nature nothing, but as she draws him out and reflect him. Give me simply, cheap, and homely themes. (*Journals*, Oct. 18, 1856, 128-9)

It seems a paradox. Perhaps it is. America's most well known nature writer declaims "man is all in all, nature nothing." It is worth considering what is the nature of the word nature. And to determine that nature, we need to realize the connection Thoreau makes between writing and nature, to understand the meaning of the insistence that " My work is writing."

HUMANATURE

Not I but nature in me (Cameron 150).

> A writer a man writing is the scribe of all nature — he is the corn & the grass & the atmosphere writing. (*Journals*, September 2, 1851, 36)

Writing is the mechanism, the only one possible for us literate humans, through which to realize nature as "in me," to realize the "Not I." If writing isolates us, as it does (and again the poet reminds us of this, dedicating his poems to "isolatoes" — "you islands of men and girls") it is also through writing that the writer ("A writer a man writing" — the naming and the re-naming not separated even by a comma, so that the naming is also an activity) becomes the landscape, makes possible the expression of the landscape: the corn, grass and atmosphere writing.

Nature is "nothing" except in terms of "reflection" — the only terms by which we know nature. We reflect as we are reflected in the act of writing (writing being the main way to reflect on experience). As basic as this form of reflection is, there is something more basic. Through writing, identification:

> My thoughts are driven inward, even as clouds and trees are reflected in the still, smooth water. There is an inwardness even in the mosquitoes' hum, while I am picking blueberries in the wood. (*Journals*, July 14, 1854)

Nature is accessible only through its reflection; and the act of writing, enabling us to reflect even more, mirrors this quality of how we, both the instruments of nature and those who stand outside of it, are able to overcome the alienation that characterizes our collective destructive relationship to nature which is too little recognized as self-destruction. Authentic writing is authentic meditation, immersion of the self in the world. Edward Abbey points to the same awareness with his comments about the appeal of the desert landscape, an appeal that reads like the paradox every nature writer must somehow learn to appreciate: "What draws us into the desert is the search for something intimate in the remote" (92). This "draw" is what pulls every nature writer.

Again it is Abbey who points us to the origin of this appeal, which is the affection moving us out into nature to the degree that we appreciate its specifically human aspect: "Wilderness begins in the human mind." It's worth recalling Thoreau's view on objectivity (which recalls Olson, Oppen, Stein), for the destruction humans have wrought on nature has been accomplished by first making it something apart from the human. This apart-ness is a product of the self separated through writing, but this separateness is only overcome through writing. Through writing we can attain the necessary attention to the subject, the self:

> There is no such thing as pure objective observation. your observation, to be interesting, i.e. to be significant, must be subjective. The sum of what the writer of whatever class has to report is simply some human experience, whether he be poet or philosopher or man of science....It matters not where or how far you travel, — the farther commonly the worse, — but how alive you are. (*Journals*, May 6, 1854, 104)

Nature is only approachable through the reflected act, the "speaking and listening" that characterizes writing, specifically journal writing:

> I perceive that more or other things are seen in the reflection than in the substance. (*Journals*, Dec. 9, 1856 132)

> The beauty of the sunset is doubled by the reflection....The reflected sky is more dun and richer than the real one. (*Journals*, Sept. 7, 1854 107)

Reflecting as an act of writing and an act of nature is more than a "doubling" of beauty. It is more than an increase of richness, as if aesthetic judgement was a measure of quantity. Reflection allows the writer access to the "more or other things," making of the writer the "scribe of all nature." The writer is not only the writer writing but, as part of nature, allows nature to reflect:

> Returning, I see the red oak on R. W. E's shore reflected in the bright sky water. In the reflection the tree is black against the clear whitish sky, though as I see it against the opposite woods it is a warm greenish yellow. But the river sees it against the bright sky, and hence the reflection is like ink. The water tells me how it looks to it seen from below. (*Journals*, Nov. 7, 1857, 149)

"... reflection is like ink." Thoreau purposefully or not links his observation directly to writing. And it is through writing that the elements themselves speak to him and to us. To see nature this way, not directly but side-wise, is to approach nature as a humble suitor, divesting oneself of attachments that would subsume the perception into some category alien to the reflected act that is more an act of love than ownership:

> I think that most men, as farmers, hunters, fishers, etc., walk along a river's bank, or paddle along its stream, without seeing the reflections. Their minds are not abstracted from the surface, from the surfaces generally. It is only a reflecting mind that sees reflections. (*Journals*, Nov. 2, 1857, 149)

The detachment Thoreau offers us as necessary for perception is like the detachment the Buddhists mention as necessary for a genuine participation in nature, necessary for enlightenment. The side-wise vision acknowledges the writer's part in making nature express itself, and the expression involves no hierarchy of values placed on objects "torn" from nature's process. In other words, what we simply see we see falsely:

> Man cannot afford to be a naturalist, to look at Nature directly, but only with the side of his eye. He must look through and beyond her. (*Journals*, March 23, 1853, 87)

This indirection, this "wooing of nature," is also similar to what Zen Buddhists report as necessary for a complete appreciation of nature:

> There is a Japanese saying, "For the moon, there is no cloud. For the flower, there is the wind." When we see a part of the moon covered by a cloud, or a tree, or a weed, we feel how round the moon is. But when we see the clear moon without anything covering it, we do not feel the roundness the same way we do when we see it through something else. (Suzuki 121)

And a complete appreciation of nature is an appreciation of self. The ego self becomes Thoreau's "Not I":

> Dogon-zenji said, "To study Buddha is to study ourselves. To study ourselves is to forget ourselves (Suzuki 79).

This study of self/nature/buddha is realized through the recognition that the lowest is the highest, or as Charles Olson wrote it: "There are no hierarchies, no infinite, no such many as mass, there are only eyes in all heads,/ to be looked out of" (*Maximus* 33).

This refusal to subsume perception to some system outside of the act of seeing, some category making the observer dependent on attachment to anything other than the manner in which nature organizes the field of the materials of perception, organizes the observer as part of that field, and though it is not religion it has a religious quality to it: it demands that the "lowest become highest, the least first" — a weed rather than a redwood because the weed forces the attention onto the self making all perception a creative activity. Through writing, this religious quality is essentially human:

> But for Zen students a weed, which for most people is worthless, is a treasure. With this attitude, whatever you do, life becomes an art. (Suzuki 33)

> The question is not what you look at, but what you see. (*Journals*, Aug. 5, 1851, 34)
>
> Granted that you are out-of-doors; but what if the outer door is open; if the inner door is shut! You must walk sometimes perfectly free,not prying nor inquisitive, not bent upon seeing things. (*Journals*, Aug. 21, 1851, 35)
>
> I sympathize with weeds perhaps more than with the crops they choke, they express so much vigor. They are the truer crop which the earth more willingly bears. (*Journals*, July 24, 1852, 75)
>
> Many a weed here stands for more of life to me than the big trees of California would if I should go there. (*Journals*, Nov. 20, 1857, 153)

Thoreau's appreciation for the vigor of nature expressed through the weeds is also a recognition of the act of writing as an expression of the aliveness of the writer. Nature, religion, and writing are one:

> The scripture rule, "Unto him that hath shall be given," is true of composition. The more you have thought and written on a given theme, the more you can still write. Thought breeds thought. It grows under your hands. (*Journals*, Feb. 13, 1860, 204)

The journal writer becomes not a nature writer but a writer <u>of</u> nature when the writer writes continually with the awareness of this intimate connection between writing, the growth "under the hands," and the perception of nature as not something other than the writer writing, nature dependent for its reflection on the writer, but the writer not as apart from nature but as a part of the event we can call nature writing.

Nature writing means staying put long enough to become a part of the natural process through recording one's self within it; it means becoming a writer hard at work on the appropriate expression of writing, on style. It has been long taken for granted that Thoreau wrote in his journals as a kind of preliminary sketch for books that he would someday write. It has more persuasively been argued recently that he wrote in journals the most appropriate way he could, not as preparation for anything else but as an act of participation in nature (Cameron). Journal writing is not a pre-production for a commodity-to-be, a sketch of a future book; it is a unique kind of perception, not an incomplete product but a completing process.

Again and again through his journals, Thoreau reminds himself and reminds us of the connection of writing to staying at home. Thoreau is the originator of the poetry of "place."

> A feeble writer and without genius must have what he thinks a great theme, which we are already interested in through the accounts of others, but a genius —a Shakespeare, for instance— would make the history of his parish more interesting than another's history of the world. (Shepard 219)

To "make the history of his parish more interesting than another's history of the world" is exactly what Thoreau did. And the interest that we

have in what he did is due to the quality of his writing as much as to what he reveals about the place we have come to know as Concord.Thoreau wrote much about this place, journals of over two million words, because there is so much to write about any place. And once the writer understands that the drama of a place is determined by the writer's relationship to that place, the writing never ends because the drama of self-discovery never ends. Writing becomes a revelation, laying bare the relationship of things to each other and to the writer. There is no other way to make these revelations.

Any writing is the occasion for overcoming the very split from nature that writing itself has brought about. But what is called the nature journal has shown itself to be writing in service of self and nature. The nature journal, essentially human and as natural as writing can be, attracts us through its ability to unify the seemingly disparate worlds of the human and nature into humanature. As Thoreau observes — an observation gained only through the act of writing — the nature journal attracts us to it, and to nature, and to the playful and mysterious qualities of language itself with language's punning, often painful, many meanings, possible in every word.

NOTE

1 Unless otherwise indicated, the Thoreau journal entries are from *Henry David Thoreau, an American Landscape*. Robert L. Rothwell, ed. New York: Paragon House, 1991.

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THE SINGLE-MENTION LIST

Nancy LaPaglia

> *"In some parts of South America, armadillos grow to almost five feet in length and are allowed to teach at the junior-college level."*
>
> (Barthelme, "Lightning" 177)

While doing research on references to two-year colleges in American fiction, I developed what I call a single mention list, of short stories, novels, films or fictional television programs that refer to a community or junior college just once. I began to notice that when this occurs, there is a specific usage in mind. "Community college" and "junior college' have become shorthand for a long inventory of pejorative, demeaning adjectives.

In much the same way, the mention of certain cities or towns used to be a shorthand way for comedians to indicate people who were hicks, backwater, even dim-witted. A two-year college character in fiction has become a synonym for a loser, a clown, someone who is not to be taken seriously. This fictional character is more likely to be a student than a member of the faculty or staff, and she is usually a working-class white woman and a re-entry student, a woman older than the "traditional" age. (She is rarely a minority working-class woman, even though many attend two-year schools.)

I'll begin with single-mentions in novels. In Jill Eisenstadt's *From Rockaway*, a group of bored young lifeguards try to break away from the banality of "Rotaway," New York. One female failure winds up at the local community college. In Gloria Naylor's *The Women of Brewster Place*, a middle-class young African-American who sees herself as a revolutionary enrolls part-time in a community college, precisely because such a school has no status, and thus she need not apologize for being upwardly mobile. In another Barthelme work, *Paradise*, three direction-less beauties survey their chances for a better life. One has one and a half "ragged years" at a community college; they all realize this does not improve her odds in the least. In Walter Walker's *The Immediate Prospect of Being Hanged*, the central character enrolls at Walmouth Junior College, located in an eastern state, instead of going to Vietnam. His father wanted him to go to a "good" college like Yale, and when the student receives "B" grades the first semester without going to class, the father gets him a job as an insurance adjuster. In the opinion of the novel's narrator, the junior college was a school for draft-dodgers, re-entry women and the very dumb.

Short stories provide similar material. In Ella Leffland's "Last Courtesies," a gum-snapping, stereo-blasting young hooker is "taking

macrame and World Lit. at the jay cee." (141). Her boyfriend, a serial murderer known as the Rain Man, tells us this. In Lee Smith's "Bob, A Dog", a beautician's husband teaches at the community college "instead of having a real job" (21). She herself is a loser; when he wishes to become more trendy, he leaves her for a frizzy-haired math teacher who jogs.

The *New Yorker* printed Alan Sternberg's "Moose". Moose works at the dump. His dream is to work up to a larger landfill machine. He takes introductory chemistry at Middlesex Community College. He will fail, in the course and in life. In "The Deer Leg Chronicle" by R. D. Jones, a crazed young man is terrorizing a North Carolina town by breaking things with a deer leg. (He had started out with a rabbit's foot at age five, and worked his way up.) Eventually, he mends his ways and gets a job in a shoe store, but not before trying to break the storm door of Marsha, a student he met in a chemistry class he was taking at Surry Community College.

I found single mentions in one play and one poem. In Lynn Siefert's *Little Egypt*, a nerdy daughter in a battling family is called "Egghead" because of her year at a local junior college. Unlike her sexy sister, she loves to read. *The History of Penicillin* is a favorite. She finds happiness with a local goof. In Donald Hall's *Six Poets in Search of a Lawyer*, Dullard "teaches at a junior college where/ He's recognized as Homer's son and heir" (61).

Murder mysteries currently are excellent sources. In Valerie Miner's *Murder in the English Department*, a non-tenured woman on the Berkeley English faculty imagines in her worst nightmare that she is exiled to Natchez Junior College. Her non-academic clod of a brother-in-law thinks the local community college is good enough for his bright daughter, as it was for his empty-headed daughters-in-law. Ms. Berkeley will rescue the daughter, for a happy ending.

Carolyn Hart's *A Little Class on Murder* is an interesting single mention, since that mention appears only on the cover of the paperback. Because the class in question has some older women students and the subject matter of the course is popular culture, the cover refers to Chastain Community College, even though the college has an M.A. program, students who get Fulbrights, publish-or-perish faculty, and other accoutrements not usually found in two-year schools. And it is never once called a community college in the book.

Charles Willeford, in *Miami Blues* and other hard-boiled mysteries, uses two-year college references more than once. In *The Burnt Orange Heresy*, two young women, students from Palm Beach J. C., take notes at an art gallery opening. The mention seems unusually neutral, and the two play no other part in the story. In Joan Hess's *Strangled Prose*, a faculty member at a small liberal arts college who is a militant feminist and a suspected lesbian is asked to leave. "At this point I'm praying for a backwater junior college to at least read my résumé," she says (108). She compares the two-year college to Greenland, "a swan dive into academic obscurity"(108).

Fiction that occurs in non-print media offers more illustrations. In the movie *Maid to Order*, a spoiled young woman, formerly wealthy but now poor, says, "I did not spend six years in junior college to become a maid!" In *Sibling Rivalry*, a woman who is married to a rich surgeon advises the flaky and poorer sister she considers hopeless, "Maybe you could go to a community college or something." In the film *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, as well as in Tom Wolfe's novel, an African-American young man has been run over. His high school English teacher sets an interviewer straight about what it means to be an honors student and go on to college in the victim's milieu. "Honors" means you caused no trouble, and a community college is not a "real" college.

Now that attending a two-year college has been a mass cultural pattern for over a quarter of a century, some fictional examples can be found on television. Most of them are not single mentions, since an entire skit or episode may revolve around a community college situation. Some of the mentions are actually positive in nature. There is, however, psychologist Dr. Crane on *Cheers*, who reacts in horror at the suggestion he may wind up teaching at a two-year school. At a later point, he says, "Well, damn me to a community college!"

To mention a two-year college connection imposes a negative filter on the person or event being described, and so it may be deleted out of "kindness." Gloria Steinem, in her recent book on self-esteem, *Revolution from Within*, discusses the made-for-TV movie *Nobody's Child* at length, without ever mentioning that the central character, her rescuers and her academic mentors are all either students or faculty at a community college. In this case, I am assuming that Steinem did not wish to inflict the negative filter on these admirable characters, since their story is meant to be inspirational.

Are there positive examples to counter the trend? Of course. But not many of them. The entire list of fictional works that refer to two-year colleges is short, especially when compared to the thousands of examples mentioning four-year colleges and universities. No researcher need bother with a single mention list there. Hundreds of novels, for example, are actually set in a four-year school; I have found only one novel set in a two-year school, Dorothy Bryant's *Ella Price's Journal*. Perhaps the last section of Nancy Pelletier's *The Rearrangement* qualifies as a second example, and the murder mystery *The Nominative* Case as a third. Luckily, I was able to locate about three dozen other works of fiction that treat the two-year college in some way, even though it is not used as the major setting.

Why is "community college" shorthand for less than mediocre? I suspect for the same reasons that two-year colleges are deemed hardly worth writing about in the first place. They are full of "non-traditional," low-status people. These are people closer to the margins, working-class, or women, or from minority groups, or older, or recent immigrants, or the urban poor (or the rural poor, for that matter). They have little appeal to writers, unless they are shooting each other or dealing dope or saving the farm. And the millions of middle-class whites who are also attending two-

year colleges, quietly trying to improve their lives, are equally ignored or mocked.

Why is it still acceptable, or even fashionable, to belittle community college people, especially if they are white, working-class women? It is curious that these women are demeaned for trying to do something that might easily be viewed positively. Are writers maintaining their own elite status at the two-year college's expense, or reflecting a culture that wishes to do this? Does a post-modern stance see community college people as hopelessly naive, trying to preserve optimistic traditional values? Or is it simply easier to use trite metaphors?

I will end this discussion with two examples from popular culture-murder mysteries-that could begin that second list. Texas author Bill Crider, in *Shotgun Saturday Night*, mentions once that the new woman deputy, who will soon prove herself to be competent and effective, got her A.A. in law enforcement from a community college near Houston. And in Chicago, Mike Raleigh, in *Death in Uptown*, mentions Truman College, if only in passing. We never meet a character connected to it, but the school stands as a helpful presence in a neighborhood that needs a lot of assistance. Both writers are in community college English departments, and they are familiar with the more positive aspects of re-entry white women and other two-year college students.

Can this narrow view of the community college be broadened, enriched to become a richer reflection of the actual people involved? With over five million now enrolled, and staffed by close to one-half of all college teachers, surely two-year schools can provide other writers with some entries for Single Mention List #2: Community Colleges are for Winners.

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THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF THE CURRICULUM: RATIONALE FOR AN INNOVATIVE INTERDISCIPLINARY HUMANITIES PROGRAM, "ARTIFACTS OF CULTURE"

George L. Scheper

We have all heard the rather cynical truism that there are good reasons for everything we do, and there are real reasons—in fact, I'm sure that there are good and better, real and more real reasons, with every imaginable gradation, as well as all manner of serendipity, mischance, coincidence, and *Zeitgeist* at work in everything we do. So the fact is, that in describing the genesis and rationale of the "Artifacts of Culture" program at Essex Community College, a curricular innovation that has dramatically altered and reformed my professional and even personal life, and that of my colleagues and the hundreds of students who have been involved in the program over the past 12 years, I am hard put to sort out the "real" and the "good" reasons for inaugurating it, the initial enthusiasms and the subsequent hindsights. However it came about, through whatever tangle of mixed motivations, fond imaginings, and sheer circumstance, what I wish to share with you is a curriculum design that has in fact returned those of us who have participated in it to our original sense of what liberal education is all about, reminded us why we entered the profession in the first place, and restored to us a large sense of what, after all, is possible. I say "after all," because the voice that comes from professional educationists all too often is a call to serve statistical and bureaucratically defined institutional purposes. There are always compelling reasons put forward for pulling in our dreams and serving these seeming-practical purposes, but from traditional Yiddish wisdom we can learn the important words, "and yet:" "All this may be so—and yet..."

So, it may be true that enrollments have declined, that the balance has increasingly shifted from the liberal arts to vocational and career-based training, that educational institutions have more and more come to be operated on managerial principles of zero-based budgeting, systems-analysis, competency-based objectives, and a hundred other graceless hyphenated buzzwords. And yet. And yet, we recall a not so distant voice of an educator and a poet reflecting that the aim of criticism—and no less of education—was to propagate the best that has been known and thought in the world, to learn to see the object steadily and to see it whole, and to contemplate it as in itself it really is. (More recently, of course, have come the calls to re-examine the canon in light of factors of race, class and gender, and of multiculturalism—all of which reinforces our original notion in designing this program of rethinking the whole matter of curriculum content in the humanities.) And so it was that in the spring of 1978 two weary but still

hopeful teachers and one skeptical but willing to be convinced division chairman went to Orlando, Florida, to go fishing, not for marlin but for innovative ideas at an NEH-sponsored curriculum-development conference. There, amid the usual melange at such events of good will and tedium and rather dreadful cocktail hours, a spark was struck, and after a year of planning supported by some released time, we applied for and received an NEH Pilot Grant to implement the curricular idea we had come up with, the Artifacts of Culture (a somewhat awkward sobriquet which has replaced our equally awkward but also embarrassingly sexist original moniker, the Artifacts of Man), a sequence of team-taught interdisciplinary one-credit courses ("modules") in humanities.

Our project design seemed to us in our initial enthusiasm highly original and full of bright promise. Over 12 years and over 75 modules later, our enthusiasm, our sense of the originality and the bright promise have actually increased rather than diminished. Hence our desire to share and replicate the program. On the one hand, the Artifacts program was intended to address the notorious "plight of the humanities" that everyone was talking about in the late '70's, the national need for a renewed commitment to the liberal arts and a recognition of the centrality of cultural literacy (before that term acquired its current specific reference)—and, on the other, to address our own sense of frustration with what I now cannot resist calling the unbearable lightness of the standard curriculum: its dogged reiterativeness, its disciplinary parochialism, its futile polarization of esoteric scholarliness and general education superficiality, above all, its loss of vitality and central vision—all of which we thought we could see reflected in students' increasing alienation from the liberal arts ideal.

At the same time, postsecondary institutions seemed to be dealing with the problem—if they dealt with it at all—by following either a populist/pragmatic approach, redesigning the curriculum to reflect the perceived interests or "needs" of the student body and/or the community or however the "clientele" was defined from moment to moment, or else a traditionalist/elitist approach that sought in one way or another to restore and reimpose the "great tradition" or "legacy." Subsequently, we have seen fervent advocacies of relevance, back to basics, critical thinking, reclaiming the legacy, cultural literacy, multi-culturalism, and any number of other causes that have contributed to the dialogue but have also become virtual shibboleths leading to that futile and self-defeating polarization of "populist" and "elitist" approaches to liberal arts general education. In our Pilot Grant proposal, we put forward a curricular model that we believed then and believe now cuts across this populist/elitist dichotomy or dilemma. Our thinking came to focus on a particular unexamined metaphor that seems to underlie almost everyone's assumptions about the design of the postsecondary curriculum in every discipline: that it should be structured like a pyramid. As we expressed it in the grant proposal:

> A pyramidal model of learning is pervasive in undergraduate education, especially in the humanities, in which broad foundations are laid in the introductory courses, usually by means of extensive "surveys," and then successively narrower focuses are intro-

> duced in succeeding electives. In the case of literature, for example, most students will take one of the survey courses, covering hundreds if not thousands of years, but only the relatively few students who go on to elect another literature course...will experience the more intensive study of a period or major author course; finally, only the very few students who go on to graduate school will ever have the experience of studying a single work intensively in a graduate seminar...And yet, ironically, it is precisely in just such intensive study where the real excitement and satisfaction of personal discovery in the study of humanities often first takes place. As a result it seems to us, education in the humanities for most of our students remains a rather passive affair, based upon generalizations and critical concepts that are simply handed down by the textbook introductions or by the instructor. There is little opportunity for the student to encounter the primary materials (other than the assigned selections themselves) of humanistic study or to become familiar and conversant with a great work of the past as he or she is with the immediate environment of the contemporary culture. Thus, what we are proposing is nothing less than an inversion of this usual pyramidal curricular model. By proposing to introduce students at the undergraduate level to the intensive study of a small group of selected artifacts—each discussed and analyzed by a team of instructors from different disciplines—we are operating on the hypothesis that a student in whom we presuppose no particular background or familiarity with the material can, through this approach, achieve a really competent level of discourse in criticism of the arts.

The traditional pyramid may, indeed, be one meaningful approach to structuring liberal education, but it has come to be an unexamined premise. Why, when students' everyday lives offer virtually no reinforcement of the values represented by the liberal arts, and when their backgrounds give them no common frame of cultural reference, why the "survey" of English or American or World literature, or a genre-oriented "introduction to literature" should seem like a good idea as a place to begin a higher liberal education, no one seems to ask. No one, it seems, questions whether the "hermeneutical gap" between classic literature, art or music (and the critical traditions that have evolved around them), on the one hand, and the student sitting in class, on the other, is effectively bridged by a course in the *Norton* or *Oxford Anthology of English Literature* or its analogues in art or music. Does anyone ever ask whether, in the one, or two, literature courses most students will ever take in college, a week on Chaucer, a couple of weeks on Shakespeare, a day or two on Donne, a week on Milton, and so on, can make any real sense at all? Can such literary zipless-bleeps (apologies to Erica Jong) be really thought by anyone to constitute significant encounters, let alone "marriages," between students and poetry? Octavio Paz has poignantly shown how the pyramid has functioned in a virtually worldwide context as a mechanism for and archetype of oppression, from Egypt to Tenochitlan, and it is perhaps no frivolous

parallel to see the curricular pyramid as a fundamental impediment to the marriage of true minds, that is, to the spiritual marriage between the mind and the world envisioned in Wordsworth's *Prelude*.

There is no point in denying that the survey does serve some meaningful purposes, in particular that it answers to the sense that every student should have some sort of coherent "overview" of literary (or artistic, or musical) tradition, and that ideally it provides some basis of commonality of shared cultural tradition. But this has come to override every other objective and has led to the deadend assumption that the survey and an elective or two is perhaps the best that can be hoped for the liberal arts' share of the general distribution requirements. And we seem to have remained committed to this formula in an uncritical, even unthinking way: textbook companies have an investment in it, academic councils and professional educationists seem to have an investment in it, and, saddest of all, professors who wish to cling to their "lesson-plans" have an investment in it. But think for a moment of the stunning disparity between this survey-cum-elective recipe and virtually any of the traditional formulations of the object of a liberal education, such as the Arnoldian idea cited above that the primary purpose would be to bring about the encounter of the student with the best that has been known and thought in the world, and to make that encounter as informed, as meaningful as we can, and to nurture the capacity of seeing the object as in itself it really is, and to see it steadily and to see it whole. The disparity between such an ideal (and the disparity is of course magnified in the case of more radical educational ideals involving cultural criticism, social transformation or the transformation of consciousness) and the typical course in the Norton/Oxford/Whichever Anthology is almost too painful, and embarrassing, for words. Would anyone, in all seriousness, demur? When this case is presented, in my experience, there comes the exasperated rejoinder that nothing else is possible, certainly no increase in the humanities' proportion among the general distribution requirements, and certainly not "at our school." So what can you do?

Our idea in inaugurating the Artifacts program at Essex was to try to go back to our vision of what liberal education was all about and, following Gropius' dictum at the Bauhaus, to "start from zero," with no prior assumptions about what the basic liberal arts course should look like, no assumptions about what had to be "covered" (in any case, we were more interested in uncovering than covering), no notion that there was some "textbook" to choose—or any other seeming choices that really were no choices at all. Starting from zero, we wanted our absolute priority to be the meaningful encounter of the student with the given cultural artifact. In earlier presentations of the design of this program, I was much given to quoting Bartlett Giamatti to the effect that what the humanities are all about is the interpretation of texts, whether literary or otherwise; that what we were really trying to teach was cultural literacy in its most comprehensive sense (without, of course, the Hirschian connotations that term has subsequently acquired): how to "read" a given painting, symphony, building, or whatever. "A given" is the key phrase here—for one can't really learn to "read" painting or music, or architecture or literature at large or in general (general

knowledge, as Blake noted, is what idiots have). In learning how to read a given painting or building as a paradigm or case study, you not only learn ("you" here meaning teacher and student alike) the relevant heuristic context of that particular work, but also a critical vocabulary and critical methods that will be, more or less, useful in the encounter with other works with a specifically different but nonetheless related heuristic context. In such a way one can be said to be **learning how to continue to learn** about the humanities, to be readying oneself for ongoing encounters with music, art, literature.

Key to our approach, then, is that the Artifacts courses be intensively focussed and team-taught. In practice, we have worked with a modular system of sequences of one-credit, five-week courses or modules, each module devoted to the study of a single cultural "artifact"—either a single work (such as Jefferson's Monticello or Picasso's "Guernica"), or a "moment" in cultural history (such as the Bauhaus, or the WPA projects), particularly those that invite study from an interdisciplinary perspective (or, to be more accurate, interdisciplinary perspectives). What this makes possible, we find, is a more genuine encounter with the cultural artifact, and something more like the marriage of true minds and less like the zipless-bleeps and unbearable lightness of the Anthology courses. As for the centrality of interdisciplinarity, the plain truth is, as Philip Sbaratta has put it, with elegant simplicity: "we lead interdisciplinary lives" (38). Reality itself is interdisciplinary. Alvin White, Director of the Interdisciplinary Holistic Teaching Learning Project at Harvey Mudd College, begins his explanation of his perception of the centrality of interdisciplinary study by citing Michael Polanyi's testimony that the act of knowing involves an "active...[and] personal participation of the knower in all acts of understanding," and White continues:

> When I read these words I began to understand my own puzzlement and discomfort about teaching and learning. I became aware of the discrepancy between the subject as it exists in the classroom, and as it lives and grows in the imagination of real people. My awareness of the discrepancy was reinforced by Polanyi's description: /"...as we pursue scientific discoveries...on their way to the textbooks...we observe that the intellectual passions aroused by them appear gradually toned down to a faint echo of their discoverer's first excitement at the moment of illumination./ A transition takes place from a heuristic act to the routine teaching and learning of its results...the impulse which in the original heuristic act was a violent irreversible self-conversion of the investigator...will...assume finally a form in which all dynamic quality is lost.../ We became convinced that the teaching that we do should honestly reflect the interdisciplinary structure of knowledge. (71-2)

It is difficult to see how one could quarrel with the fundamental perception here, of the "interdisciplinary structure of knowledge." When we think about what the disciplines are, starting from this first fact, what we find is not so much that they are partial, or incomplete, ways of looking at a

subject, nor that they are "aspects" of a subject, but rather, in Marjorie Miller's apt metaphor, that they are **lenses**, a variety of lenses available for examination of a given landscape. The first mistake, she argues, would be to regard education as a single lens, one which may be ground to maximize either the depth of focus or the breadth of field, but not both—hence the apparent educational dilemma over "breadth" at cost of "depth," and vice versa (101). The crucial thing is to realize that each discipline or stance is a complete lens, a certain way of viewing the whole subject, and that there are any number of other lenses which are also complete other ways of viewing the whole. Thus aesthetics (or science, or religion, or politics) is not an "aspect" or section of life or reality, but rather a way of knowing or encountering all reality, all experience. There is, thus, not so much a "political dimension" to health care, for instance, as a political lens for viewing health care entirely. There is not an aesthetic "dimension" to the Brooklyn Bridge, but an aesthestic lens for viewing the Brooklyn Bridge entirely—as there is an engineering lens, and a socio-political lens: the combination of stone gothic arches and drawn steel cables that constitutes the fundamental structure of the bridge represents at once an aesthetic decision, an engineering decision, and a symbolic, socio-political decision. The point of interdisciplinarity is not to aspire to some chimerical, holistic, all-comprehensive "big picture," but rather to recognize and honor as many lenses as have a meaningful contribution to make to our understanding of a given landscape or artifact, each discipline being "a unique mode of querying the world—a unique lens through which to view it, a unique program with which to assemble a conclusion out of the vast data of our experience" (Miller, 107), our business being that, as Miller says in her title, of "Making Connections."

It was obvious, incidentally, that an interdisciplinary case-study approach could not depend on existing textbooks; rather, the approach puts primary emphasis on the use of primary sources, as well as a consideration of secondary critical materials. The value of assembling and presenting students with primary sources is that the course retains the flavor of original investigation and the heuristic possiblity, rather than confronting the student with textbook generalizations and textbook solutions. Indeed, there is a hidden elitism in the assumption that unmediated primary sources are inaccessible and unintelligible to the student. But our experience with the Artifacts program has confirmed our faith that, given a certain maturity of attitude and a learning environment which fosters a friendly spirit of shared exploration, and which emphasizes direct experience of the work, the student is well able to share in the teachers' own enthusiasm and sense of discovery and willingness to learn from one another. Such a learning environment can transcend the question of relevance, for the student finds that to strike out into unfamiliar worlds of cultural experience is not to lose or belittle his or her own world of experience, but rather to enlarge and enhance it. Our approach is premised on the assumption that by providing as much of the cultural context as possible for each study, the student will be better placed to regard and experience the cultural "legacy" not as a golden lavatory key or cultural passport to privilege, but as a multivalent,

plurivocal and polysemous heritage to build upon, or to struggle with, or even against, but which in any case is recognized as rightfully his or her own.

Based on these principles, we have introduced and offered over 75 different course modules in the Artifacts of Culture program since 1979, and the offerings have grown from a single series of three one-credit modules per semester to the current offering of four such sequences each semester totalling twelve credit hours, each module of which is staffed by two and sometimes three instructors, each of whom receives full credit for each module participated in. The instructors are fully and equally involved throughout a given course at every phase, from syllabus design and course material selection, to full classroom participation in every class period. As anyone who has experienced this teaching situation can testify, it is much more work than teaching a course alone, not only because of the requisite consultation, negotiation and adaptation and accommodation, but especially in the endeavor to accommodate one's own thinking and professional training, one's own assumptions and premises, even one's fundamental perceptions to the epistemologies and methodologies of other disciplines. This is expensive, a "high-cost instructional method," as Walzer calls it in an article strongly defending traditional departmentalization (18), but that is, of course, a highly relative judgment: pesticide-free lettuce grown and picked by union-protected agricultural workers is a "high-cost" product compared to contaminated lettuce picked by exploited migrant workers. But what are we to conclude from that? In any case, enrollment has helped to justify the expense of a team-taught program: each module currently has an enrollment of about 60 students. Topics have ranged from T'ang Dynasty China, the Psalms, *Beowulf* and Sutton Hoo, Chartres Cathedral, and Faust to Jefferson's Monticello, "Don Giovanni," Wagner's "Parsifal," the Bauhaus, Olmsted's Park Designs, Picasso's "Guernica," and the WPA Art Projects.

The program has proven not only to be administratively feasible, but in the Fall of 1992 the author received the Distinguished Instructional Program Award on behalf of the Artifacts of Culture program from The Maryland Association for Higher Education. (A general description of the Artifacts of Culture from the most recent Essex Community College Catalog is appended at the end of the article.)

Many of our colleagues at the college were initially skeptical (as have been colleagues from other schools when our program was presented at conferences) as to whether we could successfully run elective courses in such "esoteric" subjects as *Beowulf* and Sutton Hoo, or Wagner's "Parsifal," the latter including a field trip to attend the five-hour German opera. And yet, the intensive case-study approach actually requires no particular prior knowledge or familiarity on the part of the student; as our music professor, Saul Lilienstein, has put it: We will assume that whatever topic we teach will, in effect, be a world premiere for our students. And, while we leaned at first toward the presentation of topics drawn from the European and American traditions, because of our own backgrounds and competencies, the method is clearly adaptable and suited to any topic that

lends itself to interdisciplinary study. So, with the impetus of a grant to strenghten international studies at our college, we have made a conscious effort to move the Artifacts program into new areas, such as Asian and Latin American studies. Thus, it is actually one of the benefits of our case-study approach, with its flexible, modular structure, that it provides a more realistic, a more do-able, way into new areas of study than does the Anthology/survey approach.

But here I also have a confession to make. While the Artifacts program was not designed with any particular student "clientele" in mind, it has turned out to be essentially a vehicle for life-long learning and cultural enrichment for an auditing, adult and largely senior-citizen, student population. That is, while the courses are part of the college's regular credit-based offerings (and not part of what at our school is the administratively distinct Continuing Education program, a program of community outreach), and can be taken to satisfy aspects of the general distribution graduation requirements, and will transfer as electives, there are, frankly, easier ways for students to satisfy those requirements than a course that avowedly involves an ongoing process of inquiry. So what has happened, unplanned and unforseen at the time of our initiation of the program , is that this educational model has demonstrated a powerful appeal to the adult learner. Once that connection was made, once the Artifacts program and the adult learner were brought together, it has proven to be a very "meaningful relationship," and our enrollment has grown to lecture-hall capacity semester after semester, so that we have, as noted earlier, increased the number of our offerings and moved to new off-campus locations, including the Baltimore Museum of Art, to accommodate this increased student interest. (For the fact is, incidentally, that the perceived "plight" of the humanities from the educationists' point of view does not apply to the culture at large. The humanities are flourishing as never before, but in such contexts as regional theatre and art museum programming, while educational institutions have been slow to inquire into and learn why a certain shift has occurred in the centering of the humanities from the campus to the museum.) And because our adult students are interested in taking our courses on the basis of a life-long learning commitment to cultural enrichment, we have been faced with what our division chairman and "godfather" of the project, W. P. Ellis, has called the Scheherazade-syndrome: we are in the position of continually developing and offering new modules each semester, rather than, as we originally thought, developing a limited number of topics and essentially repeating them, in the usual curricular mode. This, in turn, has made the Artifacts program a dramatically effective vehicle for professional development.

What this kind of interdisciplinary endeavor has done for me is to remind me of what I know and, more important, bring home to me what I don't know—and hadn't even realized I didn't know. Teaching *Othello* with Saul Lilienstein from the Music Department, in relation to Verdi's "Otello" was full of revelations for me not only about the opera but about Shakespeare's play; teaching courses on Olmsted's Central Park and on Roebling's Brooklyn Bridge with American Studies specialist Stephen

Howard opened my eyes to what was and remains for me an incisive question: why are Central Park or Brooklyn Bridge not ever part of the general education or core curriculum?—a question I have attempted to address in an article on Olmsted (400-402). To cite one other, more recent instance: teaching a two-year sequence of modules on the encounters of the Spanish and the indigenous peoples of America with Florence Hesler, one of our English professors who has developed a professional interest in Latin American literature, and aided by two successive Fulbright Scholars in Residence (Dr. Jose' Perez-Gollan, a Pre-Columbianist from Buenos Aires, and Dr. Angel Garcia-Zambrano, an art historian specializing in colonial Latin America, from Venezuela) was an educational adventure that we never could/would have envisioned until the Artifacts of Culture model reopened our sense of curricular possibilities.

Here is where I think the discipline-based departmentalization of higher education has utterly failed us. There just has been no place in it for such crucial cultural artifacts as Central Park or Brooklyn Bridge, or serious attention to cultural encounters or such genre encounters as literature and opera. It's the unbearable lightness of the curriculum again. And yet interdisciplinarity is a continuation of the life of the mind and the experience of intellectual vitality which drew us to this profession in the first place. It involves the continual necessity to reassess one's own disciplinary background and perspective, to sort out what you know and don't know, the necessity to come to terms with those other lenses of the other disciplines, and the necessity above all to be vulnerable before colleagues and students alike—to be teacher and student at once—and to cultivate that questioning, tentative habit of mind that Arnold characterized as curiosity and disinterestedness, yet without renouncing the passionate involvement or concern, which impel us, as Annie Dillard says, to "keep an eye on things."

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Appendix: General description of the Artifacts of Culture Program from the Essex Community College 1992-1994 Catalog.

HUM 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206

The Artifacts of Culture

Offered as individual one-credit modules.

A series of team-taught, interdisciplinary courses in Humanities, comprised of one-credit modules, each devoted to the intensive study of a single masterpiece, theme or movement of world art, music, literature or architecture. First implemented with the aid of an NEH Pilot Grant, subsequently selected as one of 13 nationally selected Exemplary Humanities Programs for Adults and named to the Maryland State Board of Community Colleges Honor Roll of Outstanding Ideas and Achievements.

The program is of special interest to those returning to college primarily for purposes of personal enrichment and intellectual stimulation. The courses may be used toward satisfaction of the general distribution requirements in humanities for the A.A. degree and are transferable as humanities electives. Students may register for any individual modules for credit or for audit, and may take up to nine different modules for credit toward graduation. Each semester, different series of modules will be offered, usually one set on Tuesdays and a different set on Thursdays, with both morning and afternoon sections. Please consult each semester's schedule of course offerings for dates, times and locations.

[Following in the Catalog are descriptions of individual modules. For a copy of the Catalog write Office of the Dean of Instruction, Essex Community College, Rossville Boulevard, Baltimore County, MD 21237]

HOW READERS READ: WHAT EVERY PROFESSOR SHOULD KNOW

Brock Haussamen

About two years ago, it dawned on me that if I were asked to describe in a general way what happens when a competent reader reads, I would have no idea how to answer. Even though I had taught literature and composition for over twenty years and studied linguistics for several of those, I realized I did not know enough about current reading theory to give even the foggiest description of how this most basic process takes place. I knew more about Black Holes than about the psychodynamics of reading.

I'm not alone. With the exception of some recent graduates from English education programs and some teachers of psychology, virtually no professors know how people read. (The same holds true for secondary English teachers, who have generally majored in English, not education, and whose continuing training is almost always in literature, not reading theory. The only group of teachers with significant training in reading are primary teachers (Purves 19-21).) For most teachers at the collegiate level, the discussions of texts are molded by the concerns of the particular academic discipline. The assumption remains, as it has long been, that reading itself is an elementary skill that is not particularly interesting, that what is interesting are the implications of what the text is saying, not the apparently simple process of reading and understanding the text in the first place.

But once we are aware of the assumptions we are making about reading, it is, I think, self-evident that reading is a complex process and that it would be an advantage for any teacher—at any level, in any field—to have enough understanding of the dynamics of reading to be able to help students become better readers. This is not more true in the Humanities than in the Natural or Social Sciences, but it is true in different ways. For one thing, readings in history, literature, and philosophy are especially likely to point beyond the text itself to matters of symbolism, values, and culture, and so professors need to understand the processes that lead to, or thwart, inferential reading and imaginative interpretation. Secondly, readings in the Humanities are often primary sources—especially in literature, but increasingly in philosophy and history as well. Such sources are written in a greater variety of styles and structures than school textbooks are, and professors need to understand the reading process well enough so they can provide students with guidelines for approaching works that may at first look strange.

All of the reasons for the importance of a better understanding of reading are especially pertinent at community colleges, where the aims of teaching the humanities are high but the reading ability of students varies more widely than at four-year colleges. Two-year college faculty, more

than those at four-year schools, probably overestimate both the ability of and the inclination of students to do assigned reading; when community college students know that the essential material of the course will be available to them in a lecture or classroom discussion, many and sometime most of them will not read assignments carefully if at all.

Conversely, we underestimate how unfamiliar and therefore difficult our reading assignments look to those students who are not strong readers; our very familiarity with our course material skews our understanding of what it takes for students to read it for the first time. The problem becomes cyclical when an instructor gives up requiring students to read carefully, having discovered that they have difficulty doing so or aren't doing so at all. In such cases, the instructor misses the opportunity to give students the practice and guidance that must be sustained for their reading to improve. These days, it is usually writing that attracts attention as the skill that, when practiced in courses across the curriculum, grows steadily and may even blossom. But as I and my colleagues in English often lament, it is reading ability much more than writing ability that is slow to improve and that needs to be taught across the curriculum.

The Reading Gap

In the second half of this essay I will review what psychologists and reading specialists are telling us about how people read and how to help students read better. But first I want to put the problem in historical perspective in order to show that it is more than a matter of a weakness in the nature of community colleges or in local school systems or even in American culture. Reading is such a complex task that educating good readers has rarely been a smooth and fully integrated activity in western literate societies. Community college students are only among the most recent of those who have fallen into the bifurcation between elementary and accomplished reading that can be traced back many centuries. At the lower end of this bifurcation, reading has been considered an elementary process of decoding, simple in its components and associated with children. At the other extreme, reading is the foundation of the cultural realms of study and thought; in such realms, reading is held to be not a simple process but a complex one, inseparable from the activities of literary, philosophical, and social criticism. The difference in the two types of reading is more than a difference of skill level; it is a difference in the particular mental functions that are assumed to be at work.

We see this division as early as the ancient Greeks. Before the arrival of the Sophists in the fifth century B.C., the reading education of boys was limited to memorization and dramatic recitation, and it ended when they were about fourteen. Greek pedagogic theory held that children, as receptors of impressions and sensations and without reasoned intelligence, should read and memorize the tales of famous men so that they would emulate them. When a corps of professional teachers, the Sophists, established themselves at the Lyceum of Isocrates or at Plato's Academy, boys had the opportunity to continue their education in reading, but it was now reading of a very different kind; they were now assumed to

be in training as orators, and so their reading, instead of being based on memorization, consisted of the criticism of the poets and the incorporation of literature within their philosophical inquiries and their oratorical performances.

In the schools of the Middle Ages, the language was no longer Greek but the division of reading into two very different types of activity persisted. As long as Latin remained the primary language of scholarship and officialdom, the teaching of basic reading consisted of the memorization and recitation of declensions, conjugations, and rules. "Higher" reading, in the service of scholastic disputation and, in the late Middle Ages, the study of the classics, was carried out in places separate from the common grammar school—in the medieval monasteries and the early universities.

The teaching of English, beginning in England in the seventeenth century, was characterized by a similar division. The recitation of Latin was gradually replaced in the lower grades by the recitation of English syllables and the memorization of rules for combining them into words. The English schoolroom was a place obsessed by the study of syllables, with little concern for what words meant. Beginning in the eighteenth century, excerpts from literature were gradually introduced in the McGuffey readers or anthologies of the growing school systems, but such passages served primarily as moralistic models rather than as texts which challenged students' conceptual and comprehension skills. (Since the eighteenth century, basic reading texts have changed in many ways, but those in community college reading courses still rely on short passages about disconnected topics. The multiple-choice questions about the passages show how persistently elementary reading is treated in a mechanical, drill-like fashion. Basic reading, even at the college level, tends to minimize the notions of comprehension and response.)

Meanwhile, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the studious reading associated with criticism, aesthetics, and logic remained the business of a growing but elite university system. The ability to read well was assumed as part of the training at first for oratory—in the ministry, at the bar, in teaching—and then, as oratory declined in the nineteenth century, for scholarly writing. The nature of language and of reading itself become topics for twentieth-century philosophy and literary criticism to consider. But in the process students at the college level have often been assumed to be more expert in reading than they are. Today, while on the one hand those in developmental reading courses may still be burdened with multiple-choice questions about short passages, students in second-year literature and history courses are routinely expected to be able to digest chapters, essays, novels, or primary documents with little or no advice about how to read such texts in an effective and satisfying way. The gap remains.

The seriousness and persistence of this gap in reading education can be suggested by the importance of those who have tried to bridge it. Some of the most influential thinkers in education and related fields have seen education as a totality in which continuity in the improvement of reading ability is a vital element. Let me mention two examples.

Roman education at its best was a careful progression from the elementary to the advanced, and its most influential leader was Quintilian. Quintilian looked to memory as the primary faculty of youngest students, as did the ancients generally, but his *Institutio Oratoria* is also characterized by unusually clear attention to the proper sequencing of lessons. Under his arrangement, the literature the students are assigned to read (always aloud) shifts gradually from that which will inspire (Homer, Virgil) to that which will serve as an example of style and rhetoric (Menander and other writers of comedies, for instance). Quintilian was similarly aware that the skills and techniques of the teacher had to be matched to the needs of the students; he warned that poor teachers are often thought good enough for beginners and that the best teachers are often thought unwilling to teach elementary skills. At one point, he explained the importance of reading and analyzing great speeches with care, an uncommon teaching technique that he himself came to adopt late in his career.

> This form of lecture, requiring boys to follow written words with accuracy and get the meanings of rare words, is usually regarded as much below the rhetor's dignity; but it is distinctly his business to point out the merit of authors. . . .I suggest choosing some pupil to read aloud; then the speech selected for reading can be criticized by all the class, the teacher showing how to criticize and judge. . .[and] how the skill in subdivision and the argument and all the other elements combine to master the emotions of the audience and jurors. (81)

Quintilian understood how the progressive development of reading skills is the foundation for any student's advancement in education, and he also understood how easily teachers at the higher levels can overlook the fact that their students' reading skills are still emerging.

Let me leap from the Roman era to the present day for my other example of a scholar who has called attention to the gap in reading education. E.D. Hirsch, Jr., in his program for cultural literacy, argues that most children in the early grades acquire roughly equal skills in decoding but that at the high school level and above, those who are provided with a wide smattering of cultural knowledge have the background necessary to become literate readers, while those without this knowledge are never able to become skilled readers. Hirsch proposes a "national vocabulary" of names, concepts, facts, and phrases as "a fairly reliable index to the middle-level information that is shared by most literate people but remains largely unfamiliar to most illiterate people" (136). In one of his examples of the importance of this information, he cites community college students, who, while able to read a passage about friendship with the same range of effectiveness as four-year college students, fell behind in their comprehension of a passage about Lee and Grant because they did not have enough basic information about the Civil War.

Hirsch blames the problem on the romantic tradition in modern education, from Rousseau through Dewey, that has separated skill development from content courses. But his discussion of the reading weakness that

distinguishes the relatively illiterate from the relatively literate also illustrates the older bifurcation that I have been depicting. The division between the elementary levels of reading education and the more advanced levels has been the rule rather than the exception, and students who are brighter, better informed, or better off have always crossed it more successfully than others.

Hirsch's call for a national vocabulary is an attempt to restore a consensus of shared information that, as I see it, has broken down for reasons that run deeper than trends in modern education; the combined effects of mass production, bureaucratization, and specialization of research have pulled at the homogeneity of common knowledge more fatally than the educational theorists have. But Hirsch is absolutely correct in his argument that background information is indispensable for effective reading. As an alternative, however, to the proposal to provide everybody with a core of information, I believe it is necessary for teachers in all content areas, and for students themselves, to understand how reading works. If an understanding of the reading process were more widespread, the importance of both background knowledge and the other components of reading as well would be better appreciated. (Hirsch's chapter in *Cultural Literacy* on "The Discovery of the Schema" is an excellent recapitulation of modern reading-process discoveries which has gone unnoticed in the controversy over the rest of his book.)

A New Science and Some Old Beliefs

The scientific study of reading is very new—only a few decades old. It is difficult today to imagine how different not only ideas about reading but even reading itself have been before this century. Today we read silently, but it is not inaccurate to consider silent reading a modern invention. Silent reading was virtually unknown up through the Middle Ages in Europe, and reading aloud was still the rule in rural nineteenth-century America until urban culture produced inexpensive reading materials and demanded specialized reading for many job skills. In schools, the shift from oral to silent reading occurred gradually during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, prompted by Horace Mann and other reformers. Today, we take silent reading for granted as the normal mode of reading, both in and out of school, but this is a very recent condition.

Attempts at a rigorous understanding of silent reading are even more recent. Nineteenth-century psychologists generally conceived of reading as a matter of eye movement and word recognition, and their early studies were designed less to study reading thoroughly than to analyze mental reaction times. Although groundwork in the study of eye movement and reading speed was accomplished early in this century, so new is our concept of the reading process as a whole that the phrase "reading comprehension" was rare until the 1950s (Venezky 12-13).

These early attitudes have left their mark. Most people still tend to fall back on reading out loud when the material is difficult. Teachers at all levels are likely to read aloud, or to ask a student to do so, in order to better

understand a text. Reading aloud, and being read to, are without doubt pleasurable and beneficial experiences in many ways; they are essential for beginning readers, and the style and voice of any text can be heard in ways they can not be seen. But the belief that reading aloud in and of itself can help the comprehension of a complex text is a holdover from centuries of belief that reading is fundamentally an oral process, a translation of letters to sounds as opposed to the translation of letters to meanings. Reading aloud sometimes appears to help comprehension because it is usually an additional reading of a text, and multiple readings can indeed be very helpful to comprehension. But studies are mixed on whether oral reading or silent reading *per se* best promotes an understanding of what is read (Allington 834). Since finding that this was so, I have been struck by how many people, in and out of class, report that when they must read something aloud, they don't understand it particularly well.

The other holdover is our belief in the importance of vocabulary. Until recently, learning to read was practically inseparable from the study of individual words. And we do know that comprehension ability correlates very highly with vocabulary level; a reader who has difficulty understanding a text will also have difficulty with its vocabulary, and vice-versa. (Vocabulary skills appear to be correlated with certain kinds of comprehension but not all, however. Difficult vocabulary appears to affect the reader's understanding of details and their relationships, such as the order in which events occurred; it has much less effect on the comprehension of the overall idea of a text (Stahl *et al.*).) But it is generally assumed therefore that the correlation is also causal, that improving a reader's vocabulary will cause his or her comprehension ability to improve. Studies do not bear this assumption out. For one thing, a vocabulary that is easy to understand does not always mean that a text is easy to understand; its concepts and their relationships may be demanding even when the individual words are not. Thus the knowledge of vocabulary might be considered as a necessary but not sufficient condition for comprehension. More precisely, however, rather than actually being a precondition of reading ability, the capacity to acquire a large vocabulary may essentially be an aspect of reading ability. That is, the same language processes that are at work in reading comprehension also seem to be those involved in making sense of and becoming familiar with new words (Daneman 525). The history of reading in our culture leads us to expect that sheer vocabulary will create a good reader, but we are learning that vocabulary skill is probably inseparable from the total information processing that occurs in reading.

The Reading Process

What follows is a general outline of current mainstream theory about the psychology of reading. It is, naturally, undergoing constant scrutiny and testing by the specialists.

This processing that we know as reading can be thought of in terms of a number of different parts that are very tightly coordinated. These "parts" do not correspond to distinct parts of the brain but are rather discernible divisions in the process. It is not precise to call these parts

"stages" because, as we shall see, it is not always the same stage that happens "first." But, in order to start somewhere, we will begin with the eyes.

The eyes glance at a word or two of text, and images of the curves and lines of the writing or print are sent to a buffer, or sensory store. In the sensory store, these images are retained for a fraction of a second after we have stopped looking at a particular spot in the text, and in that instant the brain recognizes them as letters and words. Meanwhile, the eye has moved on. There is less variation in eye movement among readers than is commonly thought. Normal adult readers pause to look individually at most words—about eighty percent of the content words. Long words, infrequent words, and the last word of a sentence are fixated longer than others, sometimes for up to half a second (Perfetti 14-15). So many fixations are necessary because the eye can take in only about six characters at a time (though some estimates are higher). Fluent readers make somewhat fewer fixations and quicker ones than unskilled readers because they are processing the information more effectively in their buffer, not because their span of perception is any greater. Despite the claims of speed readers, the number of eye fixations cannot be much reduced without the loss of detailed information. Eye movement is not a cause of reading skill, it is a reflection of it (Daneman 516-7). It is not the speed of the eye that matters, but of the brain.

The information from each fixation goes from the buffer to the short-term memory, where about six or seven fixations' worth of information are held for a few seconds and interpreted; essentially this is where we read the meaning of an individual sentence or clause. Like that of the buffer, the capacity of the short-term memory is modest: most people can easily remember six random digits or random words but will be stumped by twelve, unless the person either finds some kind of pattern in them so they are no longer random or else constantly rehearses them. Low-ability readers have a smaller operating capacity than high-ability readers, who can retain and interpret more items, and thus understand sentences more easily (Perfetti 80).

Sentences are processed in cycles. That is, as a sentence is understood, its meaning is added to the slowly growing image of what the text as a whole is about, then most or all of the detailed information in the sentence is forgotten, the next sentence is processed, added to the understanding of the text, then forgotten, and so on. Thus the process of understanding or responding to a text is that of continuous abstraction, of gradually building up a sense of the gist—or macrostructure, or deep structure, as it is variously called—of the text while systematically deleting most of the details (Kintsch). Students are often disappointed that they may read a textbook and not be able to remember it in much detail. We need to reassure them that avoiding the distraction of countless details is part of how the mind makes sense of things, in our daily lives as well as in a book. In fact, trying to memorize details actually interferes with the process of comprehension. But if a reader can concentrate on thorough comprehension first, then the important details will fall into place efficiently, as we all know from our ability to recall a text that we have enjoyed or fully understood (Smith 50).

Because this busy short-term memory will not retain items for more than a few seconds, a reader has to keep moving along if the pieces of the sentence are to be assembled before they are lost. While the processing of eye information sets limits to how fast readers can read, short-term memory sets limits, oddly enough, to how slowly one can read. When one is reading slowly—for instance, when one is reading out loud—the short- term memory may lose pieces of the puzzle that it is supposed to assemble. When students, or any readers, read texts that strain the limits of their understanding, the experience is the same; they slow way down, the short-term memory quickly becomes overloaded, the sentence-processing cycle grinds to a halt, the words begin to seem random, the reader exerts increasing effort just to continue to pay attention.

On the other hand, when a reader understands the sentences and clauses of a text, the separate items assembled in the short- term memory are integrated into the networks of information in long-term memory. Long-term memory is where the gist or abstraction of what the text is about is built up. Comprehension—of sentences, of paragraphs, of whole works—is the interaction of new information from the text with old knowledge in the memory.

Psychologists speak of this existing knowledge as arranged in *schemata*. A schema has been defined as "an abstract knowledge structure"—abstract in that "it summarizes what is known about a number of cases" and structural in that "it represents the relationship among its component parts" (Anderson and Pearson 259).

There are different kinds of schemata. One type is the schema for ordinary experience, the patterns of common occurrences. I have in my memory a summary of, among other things, eating in restaurants, a representation of the typical sequence of events that occur in restaurants. If I begin to read about a couple entering a restaurant, my response to the text—my expectations while I read it, my memory of it afterwards, the formation in my mind of a meaning that belongs to that text—consists of the interaction of the text with my restaurant schema. A reader from another culture who is unfamiliar with western restaurants may have difficulty making sense of the text to the extent that it is dependent on that schema (Gardner 125-127).

There are also linguistic schemata. One is lexical, the knowledge of vocabulary, the wide range of uses and distinctions that constitute our sense of what the "right" word is, and the array of phrases and names that Hirsch lists as the information network of the literate. In addition to our knowledge of words and phrases, we also have a stock of discourse patterns in our memories that help us make sense of various types of sentences and help us follow the organization of texts. Narrative is the easiest rhetorical pattern to comprehend and recall because it approximates the schema of event sequences in real life (Graesser *et al.* 172). Story grammars—outlines that describe the common patterns of episode, reaction, goal, and outcome that constitute narrative—demonstrate the great degree to which readers are prepared to understand a story even before they start to read it.

Expository text is also characterized by rhetorical schemata—patterns of comparison, illustration, cause and effect. These patterns are important instruments for helping students improve their reading, and I will return to them below.

Finally, there are schemata that represent the reader's purpose. Such purposes are usually very specific, changeable, and powerful in determining how the reading process will proceed. I may approach a journal article with the schema of "look through this quickly to see if it seems interesting," and that purpose may shape my reading of the whole article. I may return to the article months later with the schema of "look for any references to reading process" and read it very differently than I did the first time. Purpose schemata can thus produce quite varied processing of the same text by the same person. Inexperienced readers may not have purpose schemata that are varied enough or precise enough to make reading productive.

Students do not easily activate the schemata that they do have. Helping them activate schemata means prompting them to mobilize background information of all kinds—purposeful, literary, rhetorical, and experiential. Inexperienced readers do not know that understanding what they read is dependent on what they already know. On the contrary, they tend to isolate their academic reading from what they know and from how they think outside of the class. I spend far more class time now than I have in the past telling students in advance what a reading assignment will be generally about, asking them what they already know about the subject, discussing with them where to find the important information in a piece of reading.

The reading process as it is described above includes examples of what psychologists see as the two "directions" in which the process moves. On the one hand, the raw data of the marks on the pages are taken in and processed into meaningful content in a "bottom-up" fashion. On the other hand, existing knowledge, in "top-down" processing, influences what sense we make of that data and how quickly we can do so. We build up information into an abstraction and we use abstractions to make sense of information, moving between the so-called upward and downward directions unconsciously as we read.

Each capacity can make up for the limitations of the other to an extent, and each can be abused. When sentences are long or complex or a text is not coherently written relative to the capacity of a reader's short-term memory, then the reader can quickly become exhausted by the effort to hold pieces of information together and search long-term memory for meaningful referents. We all experience this when we encounter a text that is difficult because it is over our heads, out of our fields, or confusingly written. What good readers know how to do, but what many students do not, is to switch over from bottom-up processing to the top-down process of trying to get the general idea, piecing together the parts that are understood without getting bogged down in the details, trying to connect what we pick up from the text with what we already know.

While students may not know when to switch over from bottom-up to top-down processing, at other times they use top-down processing excessively. This occurs when they assume that they know what the reading is about, based on their previous knowledge, without assembling the details of the text. They over-rely on their expectations about the text and they don't bother to find out through bottom-up processing whether the text is consistent with their expectations (Spiro and Myers 481). They make major mistakes in comprehending the text, and we tell them, "You haven't read carefully enough."

Conversely, if the reader has little pre-knowledge of the text, if he or she has too few existing schemata to be able to follow the content or organization of the text easily, if one is reading about American restaurants without ever having been in one, then a competent reader may rely on the bottom-up process and build a set of concepts through the careful reading and cycling of individual words and sentences (Samuels and Kamil 213).

Such adjustments within the reading process are matters of metacognition, a self-monitoring by which the reader is sufficiently aware of the reading process to be able to make strategic adjustments in it. Metacognition is partly a matter of common-sense flexibility in reading, but it also includes the subtler capacity to sense when there is something to be known in a text that one is not getting at. As an executive function, metacognition controls the interaction of bottom-up and top-down processing so fluidly that, as one study puts it, "The better readers seem to be those that do not have any single dominant processing style" (Spiro and Myers 485).

Helping Students Read Better

Weaker readers differ from skilled readers in any or all of the reading components I have described. They have weaker metacognitive monitoring; they either do not have the background knowledge by which to comprehend or, if they do, they do not activate it; their short-term memory cannot process as many words in a sentence; they do not recognize individual words as quickly or precisely in their sensory store.

How, then, can we help students improve their reading ability? The ability to process individual words and to assemble words into sentences, acquired by good readers during cumulative reading experiences over the years, is in weak readers a basic deficit and is not easily remediated (Perfetti 241-44; Beck and McKeown). So methods of improving the comprehension ability of college students are usually aimed at the higher stages of the process.

This assistance, in turn, is usually sub-divided into pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading activities.

I have already discussed the principles behind the importance of activating schemata, which is the major pre-reading activity. In addition to general class discussion before the start of a reading assignment, these activities take other forms as well. None is foolproof, but all have the potential to be influential previews that can guide a reader's attention.

1. Most chapters of textbooks open with introductions designed to get the student to think along certain lines. Studies suggest that the success of such introductions is uneven; it depends on how well they anticipate the information needs of a particular reader for what is to follow in the particular chapter.

2. Pre-teaching the vocabulary of a text seems to be helpful if it serves as a systematic introduction to the information about to be read.

3. Giving students specific questions or objectives in advance of their reading is a frequent and common sense approach. Studies suggest that it accomplishes about what it sets out to do—students pay more attention to the targeted material—but not much else (Tierney and Cunningham 617-8). It may even have a restricting effect. Students do not seem to read the untargeted material more effectively, nor do they automatically acquire the ability to generate their own questions or reading goals.

4. Having students scan a text before they read it and then generate their own questions on the basis of titles and sub-headings is a well-established method in reading courses; it has the advantage of helping students generate questions independently of the teacher, but it has the disadvantage of limiting the basis of the questions to the conspicuous graphic features of the text.

Pre-reading activities can feel demanding and even contrived to teacher and student alike, since they represent processes that good readers do swiftly and automatically and that poor readers don't do at all. Moreover, in the day to day routine of most college courses, it is difficult to muster the energy at the end of a class discussion for a meaningful priming of the next reading assignment on the syllabus. Nonetheless, we need to remember that we take for granted a degree of readiness at the start of each reading assignment that many of our students do not have.

If we turn from pre-reading techniques to what students can do while they are reading, we come to the array of standard techniques in underlining, highlighting, and notetaking. Studies of these techniques show mixed results, but in general they seem to be effective only to the degree—a relatively slight one—that they require the reader to take extra time to process the text while deciding what to underline or jot down. Such activities can be very practical for the review of a text before an exam, but as for improving comprehension itself, their effectiveness is limited to the slight increase they bring about in the reader's involvement. In some studies, students who simply read a text over a number of times understood it better than those who read it and marked it or wrote about it (Anderson and Armbruster 665- 669).

There is another type of reading assistance that actually takes place before students read but is directed at what they do during reading. This is a demonstration by the teacher of how to read and understand a passage; the teacher reads aloud and thinks aloud in a kind of cognitive slow motion about how to piece together, question, and clarify the significance and structure of a paragraph or other text portion. Such demonstrations, elementary as they may sound, acquire importance in light of the often-noted

fact that, even in the lower grades, so-called reading instruction is rarely that; we test students on what they have read and we discuss what they have read, but we almost never show them the actual process of reading and understanding. Thinking out loud may demonstrate that as directly as is possible. Quintilian seems to have come to a similar conclusion in the passage quoted earlier about the rhetor's microanalysis of great speeches.

We turn now to what students can do after completing their reading, and here we find perhaps the strongest consensus about instructional methodology, and that consensus is this: Any method that requires students to examine the structure of a text and the relationship of its ideas appears to bring about significant and broad improvements in comprehension (Pearson and Fielding). I mentioned earlier that among the schemata that students have stored away and seldom bring to bear on their reading are such basic rhetorical categories as comparison, cause-and-effect, and thesis-and-illustration. Any method that gets students to see the text as a whole in terms of these structures advances their comprehension. Among the most frequently and positively tested methods for doing so have been visual displays—flowcharts, networks, maps that display the relationships or exemplification, causation, problem-solution. (For example, a reader of this article would probably understand it more thoroughly by trying to draw a diagram of the reading process as described above.)

Along with visual displays, the other post-reading process that quite consistently improves comprehension is the writing of summaries. Like the displays, however, the writing of effective summaries requires teaching and learning of its own. In recent studies that produced positive results, students were trained in the writing of summaries by being taught to use main ideas provided by the text, to generate their own categorical terms and main ideas when necessary, and to delete trivial and redundant information (Pearson and Fielding 820-847). The advantage of both the summaries and visual displays over such traditional activities as notetaking or underlining or annotating is that the former, in the words of one review of the field, require the reader to "process the relationships among all idea units in order to translate the prose" into the diagram or summary (Anderson and Armbruster 674); in contrast, such methods as notetaking or questioning tend to be selective and partial approaches to a text.

Conclusion: Science and the Humanities

None of the techniques for improving reading is teacher-proof. They all require a professor's skill. They require skill in demonstrating the technique clearly and frequently, they require practice that is regular and reinforced, they require examples and questions and re-teaching. All these activities take time, and in college courses where the focus is on the content or on more visible skills, it can be difficult, as Quintilian recognized, to give careful reading center stage. Not only is reading an invisible process, but books themselves seem to lay out their agendas so fully that one assumes that the reading of them will take care of itself.

Thus science—in this case, cognitive psychology—calls the attention of art and the humanities to what is going on beneath the surface, but

the empirical study of reading does not take the place of the skill and creativity of the teacher. Science will not, by itself, solve the problem of how to teach reading; but without science the teacher remains prone to misconceptions about reading. It is important to clarify the balance here, for the alliance of the humanities and the sciences is never completely comfortable. The humanist is skeptical about just what kind of reality the scientist's theoretical model is supposed to represent. The humanist asks, too, about the values that the scientist may be taking for granted.

This last question points to a particular and serious issue in reading studies. You will have noticed how often the word comprehension arises as the name for the goal of the reading process. Although its use in reference to reading is only a few decades old, it is now the common umbrella term in the field for the goal towards which different methods of improving reading ability are directed, and it is considered measurable, however imperfectly, by such devices as recall tests. But at the same time that the concept of reading comprehension has established currency in the field of reading psychology, it has been abandoned over the last decade by the practitioners of a related field—literary studies. In criticism and in literature courses, and in the creative arts generally, the common terms today include response, transaction, and meaning-making. Comprehension implies definite answers about the meaning of a text and the author's intentions, and that positivist view has been drowned in the waves of post-structuralism, deconstruction, and transactional analysis of the last decade. Such terms as response and transaction, on the other hand, imply that meaning lies not just in the text itself but in the activity of the reader as well and that these activities will differ from reader to reader and even from reading to reading. So distinct is the attachment of the two fields to their respective conceptions that one can browse through an anthology of essays about the reading process and find that the psychologically-oriented specialists almost never use the term response and the literature-oriented ones almost never use comprehension.

But despite the differences between the two broad approaches, humanists stand to gain a good deal from the particular slant of the psychologists, and that insight might be summed up in this way: We tend to assume, as have most people for centuries before us, that reading is different from thinking—that it is simpler and more mechanical and less inspired than thinking, that it is at most a preparation for thinking. What we are learning is that silent reading is not simple at all, that it is a web of activities—that reading is nothing less, in fact, than a form of thinking itself. If this is so, then reading ability, as a thinking ability, merits more attention than college curriculums have given it.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Justina Gregory. *Euripides and the Instruction of the Athenians*. Ann Arbor. University of Michigan Press: 1991. 189 pp.+ bibliography.

Earlier in this *Review*, George Scheper wrote movingly of a unique course at Essex Community College: "Artifacts of Culture." He argued persuasively for the approach he and his colleagues used, to teach the humanities through an intensive study of a single "artifact," with an emphasis on the use of primary sources to do this. For anyone who might try to pursue Scheper's course by choosing a Greek drama as the "artifact" (as I once did with exciting results), or for anyone whose normal literature course might include an encounter with one of the tragedies of Euripides, Justina Gregory has much to offer.

Euripides and the Instruction of the Athenians studies five plays: *Alcestis*, *Hippolytus*, *Hecuba*, *Heracles*, and *The Trojan Women*. Throughout, the intent is to show

> that Aristophanes' account of the goals of tragedy is a trustworthy guide for analysis; that the plays of Euripides, like those of his fellow tragedians, were intended for civic instruction, and that the tragedians' most urgent task was to reconcile traditional aristocratic values with the democratic order. (185)

A basic starting point for each play, says Gregory, is *ananke*, necessity, and all the consequences it imposes: on those who fail to recognize it, on those who see and resist it, and on those who accept it. "At a minimum it entailed compulsion, at its worst it imposed fearful suffering and loss," but in either case "it sets the stage for ethical reconsideration." Using *ananke*, Euripides offers "a series of lessons to the Athenians" and "a modified set of standards for the democratic age" (12).

The themes are large, as befits tragedy. In the *Alcestis* Athenians were faced with the necessity of death, in the *Hippolytus* with the vital importance of moderation. War is the subject of *Hecuba*, where, differing with many critics, Gregory sees Hecuba's role as critical, warning Athenians that "even the powerful are subject to constraint. Hecuba . . . serves notice to the mighty that it is dangerous for them to overreach themselves. . . ." (112). *Heracles* shows the workings of necessity and fate, although Euripides uses these to reverse the traditional myth of Heracles' march to heroic immortality and portray him, instead, as one who comes to accept help and friendship from mortals. And finally, *The Trojan Women* - where, faced with the inevitability of Troy's destruction and their own captivity, Hecuba testifies to the power of the *logos*, language itself, "to help human beings endure the unendurable" (179).

Gregory's own language is clear, her arguments well designed and carefully presented. Non-specialists will have no trouble following her through the plays and taking from her writing a great deal that can prove useful - and instructive.

John Seabrook

Higher Education and the Practice of Democratic Politics: A Political Education Reader. Edited with an introduction by Bernard Murchland. Dayton: The Kettering Foundation, 1991.

In recent years dissatisfaction with formal education touched all levels of schooling from pre-school to medical school. The solutions offered have been a variety of prescriptions - usually related to terms like "efficiency" and "accountability." On community college campuses such issues are expressed in terms of numbers and the needs of the marketplace: recruitment and retention (marketing and salesmanship); class size SCHs (productivity); transfer rates and job placement (social status and economic development). We should not disregard these hard "realities." But whatever happened to the idea that community colleges are about the work of **student** development and **community** development?

Higher Education and the Practice of Democratic Politics argues for the primacy of that work. It argues for a higher education that would serve the human and social and political needs of its society and not only the economic and market needs. The books's subtitle, "A Political Education Reader," is almost startling, for in the 20th century "political education" is associated with political demagoguery and totalitarian politics. Nevertheless, it is a descriptive term. Just as "American education" means both the education that "belongs to" America as well as education that is defined by its americanism, "Political Education" is education of and for a democratic politics.

In his introductory essay, Murchland asks what are colleges doing "to educate students in the dialectical tradition" of classical education and politics? He reminds the teaching faculty that it is engaged in political and moral education whether it realizes it or not. Would it not be better to do it self-consciously and purposefully? Murchland, however, romanticizes the American past; he too easily finds evidence of a republican democracy at a time when divergence from the dominant West European culture was unacceptable. Murchland underestimates the long range influence of a college curriculum, and he pointedly ignores the value of the co-curriculum and of the community service function of higher education in providing a place to do what he and many other authors of this text call for: learn a deliberative language and develop "public-building action."

Murchland has compiled an excellent assortment of twenty-two essays, organized into three sections: defining the "public," defining

"democracy," and defining the role of the higher education in supporting and bridging the two. He prefaces each section with a useful summary of the essays that follow. Unlike many collections of this type, this book has thematic integrity, reads very well, and should be provocative to teachers, administrators, and, indeed, all citizens. Several of the essays provide particularly thoughtful analyses of how higher education and politics must be connected in a democratic society. The president of the Kettering Foundation, David Matthews, calls for higher education to develop "civic intelligence." We must talk together deliberatively so that we can arrive at a political judgement, he argues, and this can and must be done in the college setting. Excerpts from Amy Gutman's book *Democratic Education* present her argument that the ideals of a democratic society and the ideals of democratic education "converge," for a democratic theory of education focuses on conscious social reproduction of a "virtuous" citizenry necessary for a democratic politics. Yet, as Gutman suggests and Benjamin Barber argues, the definition of virtuous citizen is not based on some canonical tradition but on a changing, growing, lifelong cultural education that at times includes formal schooling which in turn is informed by the deliberative dialogue of a community of citizens. And that, as other essays argue, requires us in higher education to encourage and celebrate the diversity of people on college campuses by creating curricula and co-curricula that involve students in experiencing, conversing with one another about, and making judgements on the richness of the diversity around them.

The issue of political education, however, requires us to see beyond any national or cultural boundaries. For political education must be a critical education. As Henry Giroux's concluding essay reminds us, any democratic society must have "a public sphere of citizens who are able to exercise power over their lives." The alternative is that a few "experts" will usurp that power. The danger that this will happen is real, and higher education has a responsibility to itself and to a democratic polity to provide a forum, a place for political education. A fitting tribute to this book is that it will stimulate precisely the public dialogue for which it argues.

Max Reichard

Delgado Community College

When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away. Ramon A. Gutierrez. Stanford University Press. 1991. 415 pp., including notes and bibliography.

What a fascinating book, this study of "marriage, sexuality, and power in New Mexico, 1500-1846." It was originally Gutierrez's doctoral dissertation, and in many ways it shows its origins. The writing alternates between an engagingly readable style and the common, strangled prose of

graduate scholarship. If you are comfortable with this, you have no problem, and you'll find the book a creative, engaging, often exciting multi-disciplinary excursion into the history of the relations between the Spanish, the various Pueblos — Acoma, Zuni, Taos, and Jemez — and the nomadic Navajo and Apache.

Gutierrez has three major topics: Pueblo culture, as it was in the 16th century; the Spanish conquest and interactions with that culture through the 17th century; and the eighteenth century Spanish frontier culture which finally emerged to dominate the region. There are two dominant themes. One is the power and influence of the Franciscan friars in the 16th and 17th centuries: a time during which "the friars were virtual lords of the land. They organized the Indians into a theocracy that lasted until the Pueblo Revolt in 1680" (46). The second is the conflict between Church and State which finally led to the dominance of the Spanish crown's appointed leaders in the 18th century.

Gutierrez gives a careful description of the culture of the Pueblos and of the Franciscans, two groups that could hardly be more different. He describes how well the Franciscans understood Pueblo culture and how carefully they worked to disrupt its functions and replace its leadership. He also shows the other side of the interaction, how in particular ways the Franciscans adopted Pueblo culture to serve their own purposes of conversion and theocratic rule. "...quite early in New Mexico's colonization the Spaniards observed the extensive flagellation and bloodletting that accompanied Pueblo male war and rain rituals, and equated them with Christian piety and penitential practice....." (87). He describes the many divisions and conflicts that came to characterize the colony: between Franciscans and colonial administrators; between Pueblos and Spanish; between Christianized Indians and "'traditionalists'"; and how these conflicts were compounded by other conditions: disease, drought, famine, and increasing attacks by nomadic Apache and Navajo on Pueblos and Spanish settlements alike. The result, finally, was the emergence of Pope, a San Juan Pueblo medicine man, who organized the revolt which drove the Spanish out in 1681, for eleven years.

The reconquest of New Mexico, as Gutierez explains it, was an act of necessity. "The crown's motives for reconquering and recolonizing New Mexico in the eighteenth century were very different: foreign encroachments on Spain's American territories and a rise in nomadic Indian attacks necessitated the creation of a defensive frontier" (146). The building process created a frontier culture as well, dominated by Spanish governors, Spanish culture (modified by the realities of local conditions and needs), and the Church, more and more firmly under political control. A complex social structure emerged, dominated by a concept of "honor . . . born of victory and dominion, dishonor of vanquishment and domination. The conquest and reconquest of the Pueblo Indians had defined them as infamous and dishonored" (179). Sustaining and supporting the system were the Indians, conquered, without honor, and therefore properly reduced to servitude (for the Pueblos) and slavery.

It's in the sections of the book following the introduction and explanation of the importance of honor that the quality of the writing collapses. Chapters on "Honor and Social Status," "Honor and Virtue," "Honor and Marriage," "Marriage and the Church," and "Marriage - the Empirical Evidence" read like assigned topics from a graduate seminar, as though the dissertation director had specified that these should be covered.

John Seabrook

Arther Ferrill. *The Fall of the Roman Empire*. Thames and Hudson. 1988. 169 pp. + notes, bibliography.

There have been about as many explanations for the fall of the Roman Empire as there are distinct academic disciplines, and I expect any year to read a deconstructionist who will lay the entire blame on the absence of effective literary analysis in the Empire. The weaknesses that have been described within the Empire are so many and so pervasive that it often seems a wonder it existed at all, not that it finally collapsed.

The difficulty, in part, is the gross exaggeration inherent in the phrase itself. The Roman Empire never "fell" like a teapot off a shelf. Rather, the western half (roughly) collapsed, its political unity lost as Britain, Africa, Gaul and Spain were separated from Roman control. And the immediate cause of this was the military weakness of the western Empire. Arther Ferrill examines the origins of this weakness carefully in his brief study, and in it he finds a sufficient explanation for the end of the empire. "The modern historian must keep in mind the fact that Rome in the East did not fall, and any explanation of the fall of Rome must also account for its survival in Byzantium" (165).

Ferrill offers what is essentially a very simple, old fashioned, explanation for the whole thing: the Empire in the west ended when it was no longer able to defend itself militarily; and it was unable to defend itself because "...after 410...Rome had almost stopped producing its own soldiers, and those it did draw into military service were no longer trained in the ancient tactics of close-order formation. . . ." (164). The critical years in this loss of military capability were from 407-410, from the loss of Gaul and the subsequent execution of Stilicho to the sack of Rome by Alaric. "By the great crisis of 406-410 Roman infantry was simply no longer able to stand up to the barbarian forces. The cause of this deterioration...is almost certainly the 'barbarization' of the army resulting from the use of 'confederate' troops by Theodosius the Great and his successors" (129).

Ironically, Ferrill notes, the strength of the east may have helped contribute to the fall of the west: potential invaders of the former tended to turn to the latter as an easier target. He also considers it a major mistake that the western capital was moved to Ravenna: an impregnable city but far from the frontier, a location that encouraged a defensive mentality and,

thereby, less concern for the defense of the old frontiers. In addition, the security of Ravenna was such that Eastern Emperors felt less inclined to come to the defense of the west.

In a nutshell: "At the opening of the fifth century a massive army, perhaps more than 200,000 strong, stood at the service of the Western emperor and his generals. In 476 it was gone. The destruction of Roman military power in the fifth century AD was the obvious cause of the collapse of Roman government in the West" (22).

Those who cover Rome and its empire in western or world civilization courses will find Ferrill's reassertion of this ancient argument clear and, possibly, persuasive. It's always interesting to consider the possibility that those who were there (Zosimus, for example) might actually have known what they were talking about!

John Seabrook

Marylin A. Katz. *Penelope's Renown: Meaning and Indeterminancy in the Odyssey*. Princeton University Press. Princeton: 1991. 195 pp. + bibliography and indices.

Penelope's Renown is one of those books whose title immediately catches the eye, both for the suggestion that it represents the work of a feminist scholar studying the *Odyssey* and because it offers scholarship on a text frequently used with first and second year college students. Those coming to the book for the first reason will be disappointed. Those coming for the second will find several intriguing ideas to stimulate their own thinking and analysis.

The book had a long gestation, from an idea Katz developed in 1971 while working on her PhD, through some twenty years of lectures, seminars, and panel discussions. The key idea is actually found in the secondary title; Katz focuses not on Penelope's renown but on the whole issue of "indeterminancy" in the *Odyssey*. She suggests that there are, at the very least, three "narrative structures" in the epic, along with a substantial number of shifting character representations. There is the narrative of the House of Atreus, another of Helen, a third of Odysseus. For Katz, "the House of Atreus story . . . is the governing paradigm for the development of the plot of the *Odyssey* as a whole and . . . the poem . . . can be read as the construction of an alternative to it" (6-7).

As to character representations, there is constant shifting for all involved. To take that which is the book's focus, Penelope herself (Katz argues) is portrayed as indecisive but faithful, as a mother standing by her son but contemplating remarriage, as host to a strange guest (her disguised husband), and, finally, as "elusive and indecipherable, suspended in an unknowability that is only imperfectly resolved by the words to which she gives expression" (194).

96-99

In Katz's reading, everything about the *Odyssey* is indeterminate. Where is Odysseus? Will he return or not? Who is Penelope, really: wife? mother? Queen? widow? Will she remain faithful, or will she remarry? And what of Telemachus? Is he boy or man, Prince or Ruler, fatherless or not, Penelope's son or (as head of the household) her *Kyrios*, Lord?

Katz pursues her quest of indeterminancy through six chapters, in ways and with methods only a scholar of the Greek text could love. She conducts, in her own words, "a kind of contentious engagement with particular words and lines that scholars characteristically bring to bear" (18). And this is exactly the reason, unfortunately, that most people will not want to struggle through the book. Although Katz provides a short vocabulary, and although she accompanies all her citations of the Greek text with good English translations, the detailed anaylsis of Greek terms becomes tedious and, finally, will reduce non-specialists in the text and language to disinterested boredom. This is unfortunate, since her ideas do offer a creative, challenging way to look at the *Odyssey*, one that might stimulate several fascinating discussions once its details were translated into the classroom.

John Seabrook

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

The *Community College Humanities Review* is always interested in the work of scholars working in community colleges or whose research might be of value to community college humanists. All submissions should be made to the editor through the CCHA national office at the Community College of Philadelphia. Please follow these guidelines in making any submission:

1. Articles should be typed double-spaced. The author's name, rank or title, academic department, affiliation, full mailing address, and telephone number(s) should be on a separate cover sheet. The body of the manuscript should contain only its title.

2. All submissions should follow the style of the Modern Language Association.

3. Writers should submit one copy of their work, only. Articles selected for publication must be made available on computer diskette. For these, the format should be IBM compatible. The diskette should indicate the name of the document and the word processing software used. WordPerfect© is strongly preferred; Wordstar© and Word© are acceptable. **In mailing, remember to warn the Post Office that a disk is in the package.**

4. With the submission, authors should include a brief self-profile to be used on the "Contributors" page.

5. All articles submitted for publication are reviewed by the Editorial Board. Authors may be requested to edit their work, and the editor of the *Review* reserves the right to edit for length, conformity to style, and general intelligibility.

6. Authors must notify the *Review* if a submission has been printed elsewhere or if it is accepted for publication elsewhere.

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